THE JOURNAL OF AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP

POLICY REVIEW

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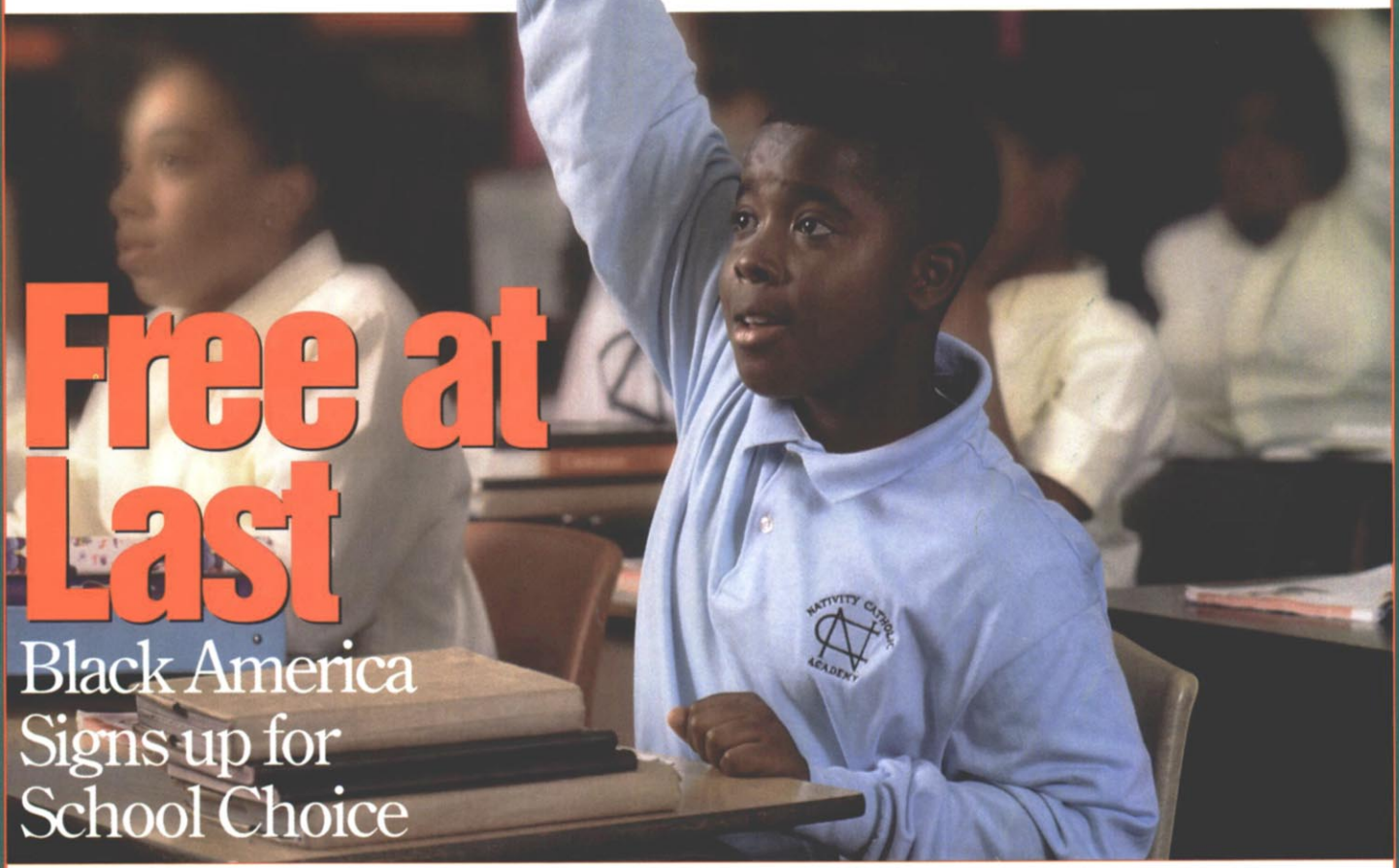
Nov. • Dec. 1996

Three Cheers for Three Strikes
by Dan Lungren



Free at Last

Black America Signs up for School Choice

AFDC, R.I.P.
How Four States Will Fight Poverty

Tear 'em Down, Build 'em Up
A Drill Sergeant's Brilliant Assault on Teen Crime

The Cultural Contradictions of Clintonism
Adam Meyerson

What GOP Freshmen Have Learned
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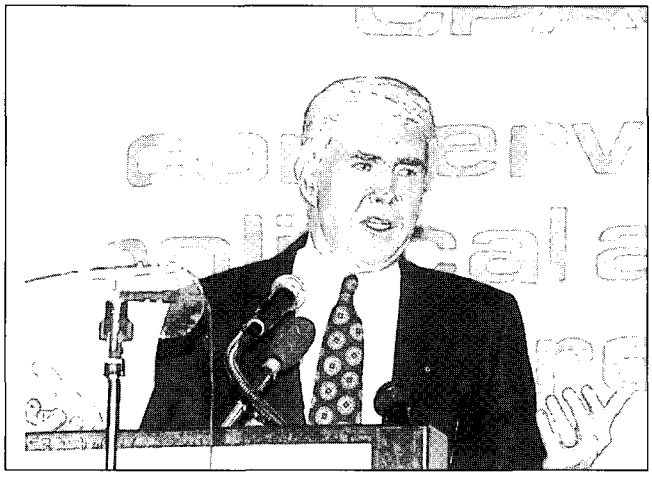

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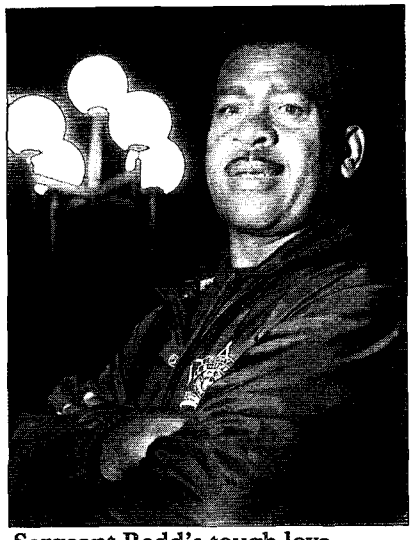

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Statement of Purpose

Our mission is to revive the spirit of American citizenship by recovering the core political principles of our Founding Fathers and by articulating and advancing the conservative vision of civil society.

Policy Review: The Journal of American Citizenship illuminates the families, communities, voluntary associations, churches and other religious organizations, business enterprises, public and private schools, and local governments that are solving problems more effectively than large, centralized, bureaucratic government. Our goal is to stimulate the citizenship movement—chronicling its success stories, exposing its obstacles and opportunities, and debating the policies that will best invigorate civil society.

American citizenship combines freedom with responsibility. These are the two great themes of modern conservatism, and they build on the best of the American tradition. Americans come from all races, all nationalities, all religions. Americans are united in citizenship not by common ancestry but by a common commitment to the political principles of the United States: the Constitution, the rule of law, the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Americans are united, too, by the common duties of citizenship: the obligation to protect our country from foreign enemies, to take care of our own families, to participate actively in civic life, to help our neighbors and communities when they are needy, and, in turn, not to take advantage of others' generosity when we can take care of ourselves.

Policy Review: The Journal of American Citizenship is published by The Heritage Foundation, a research and educational institute that formulates and promotes conservative public policies based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense.

"Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great Pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of Men and citizens."

—George Washington
Farewell Address, September 19, 1796

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Correspondence

Pro-Life Is No 'Dilemma'

To the Editor:

The title of Frederica Mathewes-Green's "Pro-Life Dilemma" (July-August 1996) misses the point. It's no dilemma for pro-life people when they are confronted with the choice of a mother aborting her pregnancy or going on welfare. For pro-life people, the first decision ends a life and the second gives a child a chance.

A better title for the piece would have been "Pro-Life Challenge," because that's Mathewes-Green's valid point: Why aren't more crisis-pregnancy centers talking about adoption? We have worked to adapt our curriculum to train counselors about offering adoption choices more effectively. But the major problem is that the message has not been heard by—or at least has not registered with—those concerned about rising levels of teenage pregnancy and abortion. And as for the federal government, the emphasis there, as with most of the social-work and child-welfare community, is on "family preservation."

There are steps that can be taken to promote adoption, and the crisis-pregnancy centers are one place to start. But let's not blame those overwhelmed, underfunded operations for a broader failure by the cast of characters who should have long known the benefits of adoption.

William Pierce
President
National Council for Adoption
Washington, D.C.

Long-Term Approach

To the Editor:

It is unfortunate that Chris Garcia's article "Atlanta's Other Olympians" (July-August 1996) depicts The Atlanta Project (TAP) as a bungled effort after only four years, contradicting his own premise that urban pathologies take time—"one person, one family, one neighborhood at a time."

In 1993, TAP coordinated the largest childhood-immunization campaign in America's history, immunizing nearly 16,000 children in one week. A multi-county computer database was then developed to track the health and immunization records of all youth in metropolitan Atlanta. In 1994, we whittled 64 pages of individual federal assistance applications down to eight, a savings of more than $1.1 million in tax revenue for every 100,000 applicants in Georgia. In July, TAP introduced a new health and safety "passport" for the parents of all newborns in Georgia.

These efforts are improving the lives of many Atlanta residents. There are no easy answers, but the only sure failure would be not to try.

Jane Smith
The Atlanta Project
Atlanta, Ga.

Lay off the Corporations

To the Editor:

Adam Meyerson's "Corporate Upsizers" (July-August 1996) is absolutely right. While all the other developed nations express their envy over the long-term ability of the U.S. economy to create jobs, Americans hear a steady drumbeat of negative reports. Part of the problem is the media, which treats bad economic news as newsworthy and good economic news with a "ho hum" attitude.

A large portion of the responsibility, however, can be traced back to Congress. A 1988 law requires companies to announce every large layoff. Those who do not face severe penalties. So do employers that underestimate the number of people to be laid off (there's no penalty for overestimating).

By contrast, Congress, of course, does not require firms to announce new hiring, nor should it. But the public certainly gets the wrong impression of what is happening in American labor markets. Once again, the unintended consequences of regulation are awesome.

Murray Weidenbaum
Center for the Study of American Business
St. Louis, Mo.

Driving Forces

To the Editor:

From Tyce Palmaffy's article on the 55 m.p.h. National Maximum Speed Limit (NMSL) ("Don't Brake for Big Government" September-October 1996), the casual reader might infer that the American Automobile Association (AAA) played a role in the repeal of the NMSL in 1995.

Our organization, the National Motorists Association (NMA), has campaigned and lobbied for 15 years for the repeal of the NMSL. It was also the NMA that led the fight for raising the speed limit to 65 mph in 1987.

The AAA was never active in any of these legislative battles, except prior to 1987 when it *actively supported retention* of the 55 m.p.h. NMSL. There were other organizations that supported our efforts to repeal the NMSL, but the AAA was most assuredly *not* one of them.

James J. Baxter
President
National Motorists Association
Dane, Wis.

To the Editor:

Tyce Palmaffy suggests that traffic engineers should set speed limits at the 85th percentile speed of traffic, and that traveling at this speed is safest. Traffic engineering publications suggest that the 85th percentile reflects "the maximum speed considered to be safe and reasonable," *not* the safest speed to travel. The misguided notion that motorists are safest traveling at the 85th percentile speed is based on limited research conducted in the 1950s on rural, primarily two-lane, undivided roads, and is *not* applicable to modern highway facilities.

Palmaffy's statement that enforcement of 55 m.p.h. speed limits threatens rather than improves safety is simply wrong. The National Academy of Sciences estimated that in 1974 alone, the 55 m.p.h. national speed limit prevented between 3,000 and 5,000 fatalities. And studies show that increasing speed limits to 65 m.p.h. in 1987 resulted in about 20 percent more fatalities.

Lastly, Palmaffy refers to engineering studies by Tignor, Warren, and Parker that supposedly show that average speeds increase negligibly when highway speed limits are raised. Proponents of higher speed limits frequently cite this unofficial and unpublished study, which is based on the experience of carefully selected state and local roads where speed limits changed from 20 m.p.h. to 30. Results are therefore not applicable to a blanket increase in speed limits on major highways. All published studies of speed-limit increases from 55 m.p.h. to

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65 m.p.h. find that traffic speeds increase when speed limits go up. States that raise speed limits must do so with the full knowledge that they have traded shorter travel times for more motor vehicle deaths and injuries.

Richard A. Retting
Senior Transportation Engineer
Insurance Institute for Highway Safety
Arlington, Va.

Tyce Palmaffy responds:

Every state chief traffic engineer I spoke with—11 in total—agreed that the 85th percentile speed, measured under ideal conditions, should be the dominant factor in setting speed limits. According to the Institute of Transportation Engineers' report on speed zone guidelines, posting the speed limit at the 85th percentile informs motorists of the safest speed at which to travel and thus minimizes their risk of an accident.

Engineers also say Retting's oft-cited "3,000 to 5,000 lives saved" statistic is at best highly optimistic, since significantly higher gas prices, rationing, and a poor economy all contributed to reduced driving, and thus reduced fatalities in the early 1970s.

According to Martin R. Parker and a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) official, Parker's study will soon be published with no major revisions. His central conclusion—that speeds change negligibly with increases or decreases in the speed limit—remains intact, and is backed by dozens of smaller studies that he cites in his report. Parker's study was not motivated by any political ties but was actually commissioned by the FHWA itself.

Contrary to Retting's assertions, so far the evidence shows that states have not traded shorter travel times for increased accidents. As my article reported, speed-limit increases in the states have been met with only slight increases in average speeds—1 to 2 m.p.h. in most states—and no significant increases in accidents or fatalities. This should come as no surprise: State officials are making prudent decisions based on extensive research. Would we expect any less?

Religious Apartheid

To the Editor:

In "Making Public Schools Safe for Religion" (July-August 1996), Joe Loconte quotes Charles Haynes to the effect that a constitutional amendment is not needed to restore religious freedom to our public schools. Unfortunately, Haynes misdiagnoses and oversimplifies the problems that religious Americans face as we approach the end of this century.

There is an antireligious environment in our country that I call "religious apartheid." Fifty years of harmful court decisions have set the stage for this religious discrimination. Courts and government officials regularly order religious citizens to sit in the back of the bus of American society as it passes through the public square.

Religious Americans have been demoted to a new underclass that is unwelcome not only at public schools but in the workplace and in many other parts of our society. Events of the last decade underscore the government's hostility to the free exercise of religion throughout American life.

In 1993, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) drafted guidelines which would have restricted any form of religious expression in the workplace, on the grounds that their mere presence constituted "religious harassment." Cross necklaces, rosaries, and even Bibles laying closed on a desk or on a bookshelf would have been prohibited by these standards.

It took thousands of letters and postcards and a year-long nationwide grassroots mobilization in Christian and conservative newsletters and on talk radio programs before the EEOC members defeated the proposal by a 3-0 vote.

But just as one federal agency was beaten back, another sprung up in its place and sought to push religious citizens further back in the bus. Regional offices of the Internal Revenue Service distributed a memo to its employees warning them not to "harass" coworkers by exhibiting religious items such as Bibles in the workplace. Congressman Ernest Istook of Oklahoma took the IRS to task for its anti-religious actions, but the agency arrogantly rejected his efforts to correct the injustice.

At Fordham University, a Catholic college, university officials applied to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for funds to update the university radio station's broadcast tower. Among the many requests it received, the FCC denied the funds to Fordham. The reason: among the 168 hours of programming carried by the station each week was a one-hour broadcast of a Catholic mass. This religious activity, the FCC decided, precluded any federal assistance to the station because such funding would violate the First Amendment of the Constitution.

In the city of New York, during the cold winter of 1994, Mayor Rudy Giuliani asked churches to provide shelter for the homeless because of overcrowded conditions in the municipal shelters. A few months later, the city granted a small stipend to reimburse churches for the expenses they incurred in providing the winter shelter. When it came time to reimburse the Catholic archdiocese, city government bureaucrats noted that John Cardinal O'Connor and the official Catholic church had opposed a special civil-rights ordinance for homosexuals in New York. Although this stance was consistent with the teachings of the Roman Catholic church and did not prevent the city from asking for the churches' help in sheltering the homeless, it did mean that as a "discriminating" organization, Catholic churches in New York would not receive the funds that every other participating group had been given.

A constitutional amendment recently proposed by Republican congressmen Dick Armey of Texas and Henry Hyde of Illinois would put religious speech on the same protected ground as all other forms of speech. The issue has, unfortunately, grown beyond school prayer or créches in the public square.

America was founded as a refuge, a place where people could practice freely the religion of their own choosing. Yet we are now faced with federally sanctioned efforts to restrict even the simplest expression of religious belief.

Like an earlier civil-rights movement, religious Americans are no longer willing to sit quietly in the back of the bus as federal officials and misguided courts deliver them to an uncertain future.

Rev. Louis P. Sheldon
Chairman
Traditional Values Coalition
Washington, D.C.

Correction: A 1984 study by the National Council for Adoption mentioned in "Pro-Life Dilemma" (July-August 1996) was incorrectly dated as 1991.

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The Cultural Contradictions Of Clintonism

For nearly 40 years, my grandma taught poor immigrant first-graders in Brooklyn to read. She also taught remedial reading to teenagers who had somehow never mastered the written word. She was a marvelous teacher who combined patience, affection, and phonics, which she always said was the best way to learn. And at her funeral, many of her former pupils showed up to honor her memory.

"Your grandmother gave me a gift I will never forget," one of them told me. "When she taught me to read, she changed my life. She opened doors that had slammed shut on me. She made it possible for me to succeed."

I thought of my grandmother when I heard President Clinton's stirring call for a national literacy campaign at the Democratic convention in August. "Let us set a clear national goal," Clinton said. "All children should be able to read on their own by the third grade." Yes, I thought, the president is right on target: Literacy is the key to all other learning. Unless he can read, a child is doomed. And Grandma would have applauded Clinton's infectious, can-do spirit. She always insisted that *every* child could be taught to read.

Grandma also would applaud the precise, measurable standard the president set for his campaign. This is not some slippery, Goals 2000-type call to raise self-esteem or ensure children enter school "ready to learn." This is a real test measuring essential knowledge, the kind of test that good teachers prize. Either a child can read or he can't, in which case some other way to teach him must be found. And it's a badly needed test because, as President Clinton reminded us, 40 percent of eight-year-olds have serious reading difficulties.

The president's literacy proposal is attractive for other reasons. It calls not for a new bureaucratic program but rather a volunteer army of 1 million reading tutors. This is consistent with Clinton's appreciation of civil society and the American tradition of citizens stepping forward to solve the problems of their communities. So far so good.

But wait a minute: Where's the accountability for teachers? Just what are they supposed to be doing, if not teaching our children to read? If 40 percent of eight-year-olds have trouble reading, what's wrong with our public schools? Shouldn't we hire better teachers who can teach reading the way Grandma did? And why aren't problem readers helped by the $30 billion-plus we spend each year on special education?

The literacy proposal is typical of Clinton at his best and at his worst. He has a brilliant knack for focusing the nation's attention like a laser beam on a profound problem. He laces his solutions with culturally conservative notions such as rigorous testing and volunteerism rather than bureaucracy. But he totally ignores the need to reform existing institutions that are already expected to address the problem; in this case, he absolves the schools of their failure to teach. *President Clinton uses the language of personal responsibility to promote and perpetuate government irresponsibility.*

President Clinton uses the language of personal responsibility to promote and perpetuate government irresponsibility.

Clinton has defined himself as a cultural conservative. There are a few issues where he is on the cultural left: abortion, where he defends even a grisly procedure bordering on infanticide, and civil rights, where he defends racial preferences that violate the principle of equality before the law. On gay rights, he sends mixed signals. But on most social issues, Clinton is the most culturally conservative Democratic presidential nominee since Hubert Humphrey, perhaps even since Harry Truman. Consider the Clinton record:

- He has issued guidelines calling for more teaching about religion in public schools; during his presidency, National Public Radio and PBS have finally begun treating religion with respect.
- He has promoted the V-chip for TV sets to give parents more control over what their children watch.
- Over the objections of the American Civil Liberties Union, he has signed "Megan's Law"-style legislation to keep parents informed of convicted sex offenders living in their neighborhoods.
- He has endorsed youth curfews and school uniforms—seemingly small measures, but a significant rebuke to "children's-rights" activists within the Democratic party who oppose any restrictions on the freedom of minors.
- He has said Dan Quayle was right about the irreplaceable benefits of the two-parent family.
- He and the First Lady have spoken out frequently about the importance of adoption, and, over the objections of the National Association of Black Social Workers, the president signed GOP legislation overturning barriers to transracial adoption.
- He has embraced the principles of the Founding in defining what it means to be an American: "If you believe in the values of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, if you are willing to work hard and play by the rules, you are part of our family."
- He has signed legislation protecting states from being forced to recognize homosexual marriages.
- He says that the three central princi-

by Adam Meyerson

Adam Meyerson is a vice president of The Heritage Foundation and the editor of Policy Review: The Journal of American Citizenship.

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ples of the Democratic Party in this election are "opportunity," "responsibility," and "community."

• Most prominently, despite the opposition of his party's left wing, the president signed the Republican welfare-reform legislation abolishing Aid to Families with Dependent Children as an entitlement and sending a clear signal that society expects able-bodied welfare recipients to work.

These moves to the center cannot be brushed off simply as election-year posturing or Dick Morris's triangulation strategy. Many of the president's cultural proposals reflect the work of William Galston, Elaine Kamarck, and other New Democrats associated with the communitarian movement and the Progressive Policy Institute. And Clinton targets cultural conservatism not just to swing voters but to the traditional base of the Democratic party. For instance, in 1993 at the Tennessee church where Martin Luther King Jr. gave his final sermon, Clinton imagined what Dr. King might say today:

"He would say, 'I did not live and die to see the American family destroyed.' 'I fought for freedom,' he would say, 'but not for the freedom of people to kill each other with reckless abandon; not for the freedom of children to have children and the fathers of the children to walk away from them and abandon them as if they don't amount to anything. . . . This is not what I lived and died for.' "

Co-Conspirator in Evasion

Clinton, in short, is guiding Democrats to a greater appreciation of family and religion and community. But he still promotes government's massive flight from responsibility. For the past 30 years, American mayors and governors have sought to deflect responsibility for failing schools, rising crime rates, and welfare dependency. "Don't blame us," the mayors and governors have said, "blame the federal government, which hasn't given us enough money." President Clinton is a co-conspirator in this strategy of evasion. He may say that "the era of Big Government is over," but he is expanding federal responsibility in a way that diffuses the accountability of public officials.

Consider the president's much-trumpeted funding of "100,000 new police officers" for America's communities. In truth, Clinton's crime initiative has funded 20,000 new cops, a 3 percent addition to existing police forces. But the president has given America's mayors something more important than the few new officers in each city. Now the federal government shares responsibility for police protection. Cities can now cut their own funding of law enforcement with the expectation that the feds will make up the difference. Even better, the mayors can now blame Newt Gingrich and "GOP budget-cutting" for the failures of their own police departments.

Senator Dole has contributed to this irresponsibility, too. He has campaigned as if local law enforcement were the president's job. The real issue should not be whether Bill Clinton or Bob Dole is tougher on crime. The real issue is why city governments, run mostly by liberal Democrats, can't protect their citizens. If Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and police chief William Bratton can cut crime by 35 percent in New York City, why can't Mayors Marion Barry and Ed Rendell do the same in Washington, D.C., and Philadelphia? If California can cut crime by 9 percent in one year with a "three strikes and you're out" law, why can't other states? Americans ought to be asking themselves these questions, but with Dole's help, Clinton has muddied these comparisons by claiming a central role for the federal government.

Perhaps no Clinton initiative promotes government irresponsibility more than his favorite, AmeriCorps. Modeled on the military, AmeriCorps has many culturally conservative attributes. It is dedicated to service, volunteerism, and duty to country. AmeriCorps sends its members to many fine organizations that foster personal responsibility. One such group, Habitat for Humanity, promotes home ownership, self-help, and sweat equity as it helps low-income people build their own houses.

But for all its emphasis on personal responsibility, AmeriCorps aggravates the crisis in government irresponsibility. It is a federal organization parachuting into local communities to solve local problems—helping a charter school in Oakland, a community-service program in Dallas, a police-cadet program in New York City. Many of these are worthy causes, but AmeriCorps usurps local responsibility. Local governments and private funders have the greatest stake in the success of such programs. They are also in the best position to hold them accountable for how money is spent. But these local institutions are less likely to seek or finance promising solutions if they think AmeriCorps will do it for them.

AmeriCorps fosters irresponsibility in another way. The federal government now does so many things that it does nothing very well. At a time when government should focus on what it does best and what it alone can do, why is Clinton inflating an already-bloated public sector with volunteer organizations such as Habitat for Humanity that can prosper without government help?

Clinton's diffusion of responsibility is best reflected, of course, in the First Lady's breathtaking statement at the Democratic convention that "it takes a president" to raise a child. No, Mrs. Clinton, moms and dads raise children. Parents can be helped by a village, properly understood: by relatives, teachers, clergy, police, neighbors. But a village defined as a national community can't help them in any meaningful way. Children are in trouble today precisely because moms and dads—and neighbors and relatives—are abdicating their responsibility and expecting the president to come to the rescue.

No, Mrs. Clinton, it doesn't take a president to raise a child. If everyone's responsible, no one's responsible.

In his convention speech in August, the president defended welfare reform by saying, "Now there's no more 'Who's to blame?' on welfare. Now the only question is 'What to do?,' and we all have a responsibility." Therein lies the essence of Clintonism. Hold everyone responsible, hold no one accountable. When everyone has a responsibility, no one can be blamed when programs fail. And, if we take seriously the history of welfare, fail they will.

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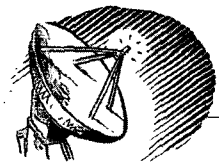

Lessons from Abroad

Shalom for At-Risk Youth

Americans across the political spectrum are talking about the value of boarding schools for poor children from broken families and violent neighborhoods. They say we need more residential schools like Piney Woods Country Life School in Mississippi, Boys Town in Nebraska, and the Milton Hershey School, Girard College, and Scotland School for Veterans' Children in Pennsylvania. Despite their troubled families and neighborhoods, the vast majority of students from these schools graduate and go on to college, the military, or jobs.

The major barriers to opening new residential schools are high costs and scarce funds. Annual per-student costs range from around $22,000 at Piney Woods, Girard, and the Job Corps, to $45,000 at others. The creators of a few residential charter schools on the drawing board anticipate annual costs of approximately $26,000 per student.

Israel's network of 70 children and youth villages offers a model for successful and modestly priced residential schools. Residential education is more widely available in Israel than anywhere else: About 7 percent of Israeli youth attend these schools, at a cost of $6,500 to $9,000 per year. Israel's system comprises child-centered communities for "normal" children who have troubled home environments. The message to the students is, "What your family cannot provide you, the community will."

Based on a hybrid of the European boarding schools and the "kibbutz" (communal settlement), Israel's residential education system began in 1933, when thousands of Jewish children were rescued from the Holocaust in Europe and brought to what would become the State of Israel. Special residential schools were created to care for these young, traumatized refugees. Since then, these schools have adapted to the changing demographics and needs of young Israelis who, for various reasons, lack sufficient support from their families. Many of Israel's top politicians (including Shimon Peres), artists, military heroes, and business executives are graduates of these schools. Roughly half the students today are neglected or abused Israelis born in Israel. The other half are new immigrants, mainly from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia.

Costs are lower in Israel than in America in part because staff salaries are approximately one-third of comparable U.S. salaries. But Israeli youth villages are less expensive also because they are burdened by fewer regulations than American schools. The typical residential student-to-staff ratio in Israel is 10:1; the ideal is 6:1. The norm for residential care in the United States is 4:1, though in some states and programs it is 1:1. Israeli youth villages tend not to have psychological counselors or social workers on staff, as is often required by state regulations in this country. They do not have to provide two adults during the night for every 12 youths, as required by many states. Nor must they hire registered nurses or residential supervisors with Licensed Social Worker degrees (LICSWs), unlike American facilities that wish to qualify for funding from programs such as Medicaid.

"We use psychology, not psychologists; child development theory, not social workers," says Zvi Levy, the director of WIZO-Hadassim Youth Village, near Netanya, Israel. He focuses on developing a child's abilities, not offering therapy for her problems. Instead of "experts" with degrees in counseling, Levy likes to hire positive role models—adults, usually married, who have served in the military, who have finished high school and usually college, who naturally relate well to the students.

Levy's youth village has 45 residential staff for 500 students. "Too many staff means too much structure," he says. Students' input and assistance is therefore needed and encouraged. The village has two rules for both staff and students: Never hurt anyone, physically or emotionally, and attend school. Students otherwise have enormous freedom to plan their free time. Instead of devising programs specific to each student, the school sets goals and provides a simple, well-planned environment with strong community norms where students learn to navigate the setting at their own speed.

Fewer regulations does not mean less accountability. The real measure of whether these programs are effective comes years later: Are graduates employed, taxpaying citizens? Have they formed healthy relationships and created strong families? Using these measures, a 25-year study by the University of Haifa concluded the villages were very effective.

Instead of "experts" with degrees in counseling, Israeli youth villages hire positive role models for troubled teens.

Israeli youth villages are largely funded by the equivalent of voucher programs. The Ministry of Education pays to a residential school what it would otherwise pay for a student's education elsewhere. The residential component is paid to the school by either the Ministry of Welfare or The Ministry of Immigration. Private funds supplement the public funds, adding 10 percent to 20 percent of the school budget. American residential schools could benefit from similar flexibility.

Residential schools offer enormous potential for addressing the problems of America's troubled youth. We could have more of them if we applied the community and child development approach, and enjoyed the same flexibility in regulation and funding of Israel's villages.

by Heidi Goldsmith

Heidi Goldsmith is the founder and executive director of the International Center for Residential Education, in Washington, D.C.

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Blessings of Liberty

AN APPRECIATION OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM

The Market's Medical Miracles

Corporate America improves our health through effective drugs, technological innovation, and a high standard of living.

by John Hood

The critics of corporate America would have us believe that it has poorly served the health-care needs of the American people. Labor Secretary Robert Reich, for one, claims that corporations have a moral duty to provide "health-care protections" to their employees. Perhaps that is because the debate in recent years has focused almost exclusively on gaps in our employment-based system of health insurance.

Most of us, it is true, have at least part of our medical bills paid by health plans provided by our employers. While the debate about employee health insurance is an important one, it doesn't account for the greatest contributions of free enterprise to U.S. medical care. When corporations create wealth and address human needs through innovation and productivity, they contribute to the health of Americans in ways at least as important as providing health insurance.

Within the health-care industry, profit-seeking companies have generated tremendous innovations in recent years in such areas as cancer treatment, disease prevention, and computer-assisted diagnostic tools. In cases such as heart surgery, knee surgery, and the removal of gall bladders and hernias, devices and techniques pioneered by American firms and researchers have reduced or eliminated hospital stays and reduced invasiveness, pain, and recovery time. From 1985 to 1989 alone, the percentage of surgeries performed outside hospitals increased from 37 percent to more than 50 percent.

America's competitive impulse generates medical innovation not only for American consumers but for the entire world. About half the world's output of medical devices occurs in the United States, and private research and development spending by U.S. pharmaceutical and device manufacturers dwarfs that of other nations. And despite the fact that other countries with less market-oriented economies benefit from U.S. medical innovations, Americans still enjoy more access to quality health care than virtually any other nation, according to studies by the journal *Health Affairs* and others.

Medical research in the United States, whether in private laboratories or universities, is predominantly funded by corporations with an interest in developing products and studying diseases. Nine of every 10 useful new drugs come from private pharmaceutical firms, not the government. In the area of biotechnology alone, private investors have spent more than $10 billion in the past decade bankrolling hundreds of new companies. "No other nation on Earth could have generated so much capital to launch biotechnology companies," James Vincent, the chairman and CEO of Biogen, has said. "It's because no other nation has the free-market system of risk and reward that America does."

Here's one typical example: Genentech, one of the nation's leading biotechnology companies, is currently seeking government approval for a drug that treats acute stroke by dissolving blood clots. This single drug, called TPA, will help reduce the debilitating effects of a condition that affects 400,000 Americans each year and is the leading cause of adult disability, often leading to paralysis and loss of vision or speech. No other treatment exists. TPA is already administered to some 135,000 heart patients because of its benefits for that condition. Yes, Genentech makes a lot of money from TPA—$300 million in 1995. Marketing the drug to treat strokes will probably add another $100 million in annual sales. But many who suffer from heart disease and stroke no doubt view the drug's $2,200 yearly cost to be worth it.

More importantly, Genentech's success exemplifies the payoff for addressing a critical human health need. Its example makes it all the more likely that other profit-seeking individuals or firms will ameliorate or cure other major medical conditions in the future. It's the profit motive, not native intelligence or the existence of government programs, that has made the United States the world leader in inventions, patents, and discoveries.

Perhaps the most persuasive case for deploying free enterprise to meet America's health-care needs can be found in routine eye care, which is typically not covered by insurance. Eyeglasses, contact lenses, and eye examinations cost less today in real terms than ever before, particularly when the increased quality of eye care is factored into the equation.

In a 50-year career in optometry, entrepreneur Bob Morrison has contributed significantly to this development. In 1963, while working in a basement lab, Morrison helped fashion the first soft contact lenses, then patented them with two other scientists. At one time, Morrison's firm was making every soft lens sold in the U.S. His rights to the technology were later sold to Bausch & Lomb, but Morrison went on to develop and make other lenses.

In 1991, Morrison's trip to the

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Middle East inspired yet another venture. At a bazaar, reports *Business Week*, Morrison saw a rugmaker arguing with his children. The kids wanted their father to retire, Morrison's interpreter explained, because he was making so many mistakes on the rugs. Morrison realized that the man, only 42, was gaffe-prone because he could hardly see. He needed glasses but couldn't afford them.

To meet the universal need for low-cost optical care, Morrison and his son created Instant Eyeglasses—prescription glasses that can be assembled in minutes and sold for about $20 a pair, compared to the average retail cost of $135. Instead of custom-made lenses for each set of frames, Morrison uses prefabricated lenses that fit into frames that can be snapped together and adjusted to fit any face. With only 152 lenses, rotated to various positions within the standard frames, Instant Eyeglasses can fill 26,000 prescriptions.

But contributions to health don't come only from the health-care industry. Oil companies, for example, have vastly improved the health status of people around the world. Innovation in plastics and other petrochemicals have made possible mass inoculations (with hypodermic needles), surgical devices, life-support systems, artificial limbs and organs, and treatments of various diseases. Thanks to innovations in a range of industries, healthful fruits and vegetables are cheap and plentiful, and workplaces, homes, and transportation are safer. All of these pleasant developments have improved our health and longevity.

Free enterprise in America's medical marketplace promises more of these tremendous medical benefits, particularly in the information and telecommunications industries. Electronic mail, or e-mail, has already become commonplace in doctor's offices. The automation of medical records leads many analysts to speculate that we are not far away from personal "health ID cards." These will provide doctors with an up-to-date record of previous medical conditions and procedures, making diagnoses more accurate and treatment safer and more effective.

Furthermore, commercial on-line services such as CompuServe and America Online offer health reference databases and the opportunity to discuss health issues with fellow patients or health professionals. Jeff Newman, a commodities trader at the Chicago Board of Trade, used a CompuServe forum to request information after he developed recurring polyps in his throat. His doctor said that the only treatment was to keep having them removed by surgery. But Newman, whose job requires him to shout, wanted an alternative. A CompuServe user in Seattle suggested that a compound in cabbage juice might slow the growth of polyps. It worked. "If it were not for e-mail and CompuServe, I believe my life would have regressed along with my hope," Newman told *USA Today*.

Thanks to the profit motive, America leads the world in drug research.

Photo courtesy of SmithKline Beecham

Information services and e-mail will play an increasingly important role in health care, according to Jerome Kassirer, the editor of the *New England Journal of Medicine*. "On-line computer-assisted communication between patients and medical databases—and between patients and physicians," he wrote in the *Journal*, "promises to replace a substantial amount of the care now delivered in person." That will not only save money but also, he argued, improve the quality of care. "The interaction with an on-line computer system can be quite comfortable," he said. "Studies show that many patients feel even less discomfort 'talking' to a computer about personal matters than to a physician."

Even more futuristic technologies may one day dramatically reduce the cost and improve the quality of medical services. A hospital in Asheboro, North Carolina, recently brought a new worker on board that can deliver medications and other items much more cheaply than the hospital could previously manage. The worker costs only $6 an hour, carries as much as 200 pounds at a time, and will work 365 days a year. It is the HelpMate, a robot that navigates the hospital using a computer and sophisticated sensors.

Health economists predict that devices and techniques for self-diagnosis and treatment will play an increasingly important role in providing good care while controlling costs. Indeed, self-medication with over-the-counter products such as aspirin and ibuprofen already helps control health-care expenditures. The National Center for Policy Analysis estimates that if only 2 percent of nonprescription drug customers sought professional care instead of self-medicating, the number of primary-care physicians would have to rise 50 percent to meet the increased demand. The extent of self-medication owes much to private-sector innovations in pharmaceuticals, packaging, marketing, and transportation.

Software companies like Microsoft, computer makers like IBM and Dell, even manufacturers of robotics, plastics, and fiber optics are investing billions of dollars in the development of computer and information technologies. Do these firms consciously set out to improve health care? Probably not. But their profit-seeking actions have demonstrably done so.

Private enterprise contributes to our health in an even more basic way than advancing drug research or promoting technological change. Because the U.S. economy provides basic goods and services at relatively low cost, families can afford to spend more to improve their lives. From 1960 to 1992, real spending on food as a share of GDP fell by nearly a third, as technological innovations helped farmers increase their productivity and reduce spoilage. Spending on clothes stayed constant during the same period. These trends freed up household income for services such as discretionary medical care and recreation. By generating unprecedented economic production, our economy has given families the financial wherewithal to purchase medical services and otherwise improve their health in a way that our grandparents and great-grandparents would find truly mind-boggling.

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The EPA Greenmails The States

by Jessica Gavora

Jessica Gavora is the director of programs at the New Citizenship Project, based in Washington, D.C.

Here's a statistic that would make Joe Six-Pack wince. The Coors brewery in Golden, Colorado, spills between 18 and 22 million gallons of beer every year as it overfills its cans and bottles to force the air out before they're sealed. That's a foamy runoff of about a six-pack a second.

One man's brewsky, of course, is another man's "volatile organic compound." VOC—that's how Colorado environmental officials classify the evaporating ethanol given off by all that spilled beer. VOCs can be harmful in large amounts, but until 1993 breweries like Coors were thought to be minor-league emitters of these naturally occurring toxins.

But then Coors did something controversial, and increasingly popular among American companies: It tested itself. The company conducted a voluntary self-audit of its operations to see whether they complied with state environmental standards. It discovered that they didn't—regulators had underestimated the brewery's VOC emissions by a factor of 17—and promptly reported its infraction to state environmental authorities.

As a reward for playing the good corporate citizen and turning itself in, Coors was slapped with a record $1-million fine by the Colorado Department of Health. The company protested the fine, arguing that a million bucks was too much to pay for alerting the state to pollution that neither party had known was occurring. The state legislature and Democratic governor Roy Romer agreed, and in 1994 Colorado became the second state in the nation to pass a law to protect the results of self-audits from being used against companies that voluntarily disclose and correct their environmental infractions.

To date, 19 states have passed audit laws—all of them since 1993—and 25 more are considering them. But this surging tide of state innovation is lapping up against a formidable seawall of entrenched federal bureaucratic interests. Officials at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Justice Department have long been hostile to self-audit laws, and that hostility has recently turned to active sabotage. States that have passed these laws—as well as those merely considering them—are being bluntly told that they do so at the risk of losing autonomy over their own environmental programs. Do it our way, the EPA has warned, or don't do it at all. Democratic and Republican state officials recognize this tactic for what it is: blackmail.

In the age of reinvented government, rulemaking by the EPA has increased by 20 percent since 1992. Wayne Crews of the Competitive Enterprise Institute estimates the cost of environmental regulation at $174 billion this year, a whopping 26 percent of the total regulatory burden on American families.

Self-audits help businesses cut through complex regulations administered by multiple layers of bureaucracy by providing them with a detailed breakdown of their operations, including suspected sources of pollution. As long as these reports remain in-house, they are useful tools that result in greater environmental compliance. But for bureaucrats used to measuring results in terms of the fines and sentences they impose, audit reports are an irresistible temptation to regulate.

In some instances, as with Coors, state or federal regulators subpoena the audit reports themselves. In others, third parties—typically environmental groups—use these reports as the basis for class-action lawsuits. As a result, many companies are understandably reluctant to perform a self-audit.

States are attempting to overcome this reluctance by providing businesses with assurances that their good deeds will not be used against them. Most state laws protect, or "privilege," audit reports from use against the company in a lawsuit. Many also provide limited immunity from prosecution to companies that promptly report and correct any violations they uncover.

States love self-auditing because it allows them to replace the old command-

Illustration by David Clark

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and-control regulatory model with one that allows private-sector innovation. Audits are part of a new thinking about regulation that prizes a cooperative private industry over a reactive regulatory bureaucracy, and environmental compliance over punishment. Whereas the old model relied on legions of enviro-cops to enforce the law, the new model does what even the most zealous and well-staffed bureaucracy cannot: detect operational problems before they become environmental hazards.

But for all the same reasons the states love self-auditing, it seems, the feds hate it. Although it cannot cite one case in which an audit-protection law was abused, the EPA has decided that states with audit laws are guilty until proven innocent. Without the benign supervision of our federal regulators, EPA officials tell state governors, you will willfully and intentionally foul your own nests. When New Hampshire was considering an audit law last year, John DeVillars, the chief EPA administrator for that region, warned Governor Steve Merrill that the law might tempt him to relax environmental enforcement and turn his state into a "pollution haven" in order to attract business. Merrill replied that he was offended by the suggestion that he would jeopardize the health of his citizens by ignoring criminal behavior—and he signed the law.

When artful persuasion failed to sway the states, federal bureaucrats resorted to a blunter instrument: their power to delegate to—or withhold from—the states the authority over environmental programs under the major federal laws. In March 1995, EPA Administrator Carol Browner warned that the passage of state audit laws "would cause environmental programs delegated to states . . . to revert to national control at EPA."

For the 50 states, this was no small matter. Although most major federal environmental statutes allow the states to administer and enforce programs, EPA officials have the ultimate say in when and how that authority is granted. They have not been shy about using it. States that are considering audit laws such as Ohio, Arizona, Florida, and California have received what one official dubbed "nastygrams" from the EPA. Earlier this year, for instance, Arizona was warned in the bluntest terms that passage of its audit law would lead to a denial of the state's authority to run the Clean Air Act permit program. Other states that have audit laws and would also like to be able to issue permits to businesses under the Clean Air Act—including Texas, Idaho, and Michigan—have been denied that authority by the EPA.

In some states, this "delegation blackmail" approach seems to be working. Audit bills died in the Ohio, Maryland, and California legislatures this year following heavy lobbying by the EPA and environmental groups. Texas state senator Warren Chisum, who sponsored the Texas law as a Democrat but became a Republican this year, said "the EPA threats have certainly played a role in delaying this in other states. Legislators might say these bills are a good deal, but they are not worth bringing down the wrath of the EPA upon the state."

Federal bureaucrats are bullying states that let corporations police their own compliance with environmental regulations.

Still, some state officials refused to be cowed. "I think scare tactics in swing districts in an election year can be effective, but I didn't poll anyone," says Arizona state representative Russell Bowers. "It always disturbs me when state law is dictated to us by the feds. But the bill will be back next year."

For others, the Clinton administration's heavy-handed tactics have only increased their resolve. Russell Harding, the director of Michigan's Department of Environmental Quality, has been a leader in organizing states with audit laws to resist federal pressure. Harding has dug in his heels in Lansing every bit as deep as Carol Browner's pumps pierce the terra in Washington, D.C.—maybe deeper. "We think we have a very balanced, very carefully crafted law," he says. "Our intention is not to change it. If push comes to shove, we'll give them their programs back."

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One Nation Under God

A City's Assault on Teen Pregnancy

Eve Jackson taught "family life" classes to students in Hamilton Southeastern High School, a typical Indianapolis-area public school, for four years. They were troubling years for her Baptist conscience.

At the exact time when the hormones of adolescents are at flood tide, Jackson says, the most persuasive message they get about sex comes from their peers—and the message is: "Come on in, the water's fine." Other voices remain muffled. Teachers often ignore or play down a state requirement that they stress abstinence in sex-education classes. Church-state legal doctrine bans religious ideas about premarital sex from public schools. Says Jackson, "As much as I wanted to talk about God, I really couldn't."

And what she could talk about—responsible decision-making, peer pressure, self-esteem—had no more effect than a flashing yellow light on a lonely country road. "So many of them were sexually active. Every year I had a couple of students who had abortions," she says. "But I couldn't talk them out of being sexually involved." Jackson eventually left public education, developed a Bible-based abstinence program taught by high-school juniors and seniors, and brought it into 34 Catholic grade schools throughout the city.

Now the public schools—in a city with a teen pregnancy rate that has risen 40 percent over the last decade—want Jackson back. Mayor Steve Goldsmith has asked Jackson to bring her chastity program, "A Promise to Keep," into 150 public grade schools this fall. Stripped of its religious references, the program will recruit at least 100 high-school students to serve as advocates for abstinence. It's one of more than two dozen initiatives launched by the mayor in the last year, using his bully pulpit in an effort to reduce out-of-wedlock births. Citing its impact on crime, poverty, and welfare dependence, Goldsmith calls teen pregnancy "the most serious long-term issue facing this city. We can do nothing if we don't solve this problem."

by Joe Loconte

Joe Loconte is the deputy editor of Policy Review: The Journal of American Citizenship.

Energize and Stigmatize

Unlike President Clinton's $30-million proposal to reduce illegitimacy, however, the mayor of the nation's 12th-largest city seems uninterested in expanding government services. Following a meeting last year that included the city's school superintendent, a juvenile-court judge, and a county health director, Goldsmith mapped out a 27-point strategy for city-wide action. His aim: energize public opinion, the courts, and church and community groups to stigmatize out-of-wedlock births while supporting teen mothers.

Indianapolis's mayor recruited religious groups to launch one of the nation's most aggressive campaigns against illegitimacy.

The mayor intends to treat casual attitudes about teen pregnancy with the same tolerance that actor Jean-Claude Van Damme brings to flabbiness: Since studies show that roughly half of all teenage moms are impregnated by males older than 18, Goldsmith wants prosecutors to crack down on statutory rape. He plans to enforce laws requiring women to establish paternity as a condition of receiving welfare. He intends to publish monthly reports of teen pregnancies in every high school in the city.

And while local Planned Parenthood clinics seek to build "creative self-expression" through dance, art, and painting classes, Goldsmith is pressuring schools to ban pregnant teens and boys who have fathered children from extracurricular activities. He even has floated the idea of sending pregnant girls to separate schools altogether.

"Philosophically we're not in agreement," says Kathleen Baldwin, Planned Parenthood's director of education in Indianapolis. "They would define the problem largely as illegitimacy, and we would define it as limited opportunities for achievement."

Esperanza Zendejas, the superintendent of Indianapolis's public schools, opposes some of the mayor's school-based sanctions, but applauds his broad-based approach to attacking the problem of illegitimacy. "The fact that the city, as a city, is looking at teen pregnancy is extraordinary," she says. "It should be happening in every city in the nation."

It wouldn't be happening in Indianapolis without the active support of the religious community, Goldsmith says. Indeed, the mayor insists that the most dynamic partner in the assault on the culture of teen pregnancy—and all of the social problems it creates—will be churches and synagogues.

In February, he summoned 100 spiritual leaders—Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, and Buddhist—to a summit on teen pregnancy. He asked them to speak out on the risks of sexual activity outside of marriage. More significantly, he challenged congregations to become personally involved with families on welfare by helping women to avoid more pregnancies, reunite with the father of their children, and get off of government assistance. "The whole notion is to be more of a mentor and support group, not a candy store," says Richard Wiehe, the executive director of the Faith and Families project, a new effort to link congregations with welfare families.

The mayor wants religious groups to fight this culture war almost every-

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where—even in city parks. Indianapolis now has 16 congregations managing 30 contracts to maintain public parks. In exchange, churches can sponsor events in the parks with minimal bureaucratic hassle. Goldsmith's explicit hope is that people of faith will form relationships with children who live in surrounding neighborhoods. "We could put police officers on every corner of the city," he says, "but if our people did not believe in God and basic moral values, then we would still not have a safe community."

Crime statistics seem to side with the mayor: Juvenile crime in Indianapolis has increased nearly tenfold in the last decade, and 75 percent of those offenses were committed by fatherless children. Judge Jim Payne of the juvenile court of Marion County says at least 600 new juveniles enter the system each month. "Out-of-wedlock birth is driving every single rotten outcome in our city," says Krista Rush, Mayor's Goldsmith's social-policy advisor.

Eve Jackson: promoting teen abstinence.

Photo courtesy of Eve Jackson

At Goldsmith's request, the Indianapolis Training Center (ITC) set up shop in the city a few years ago to reach out to troubled youth and their families. Payne now refers kids headed for state detention centers to the Christian-based program, which houses about two dozen teens at a time in its residential center. To overcome objections by the Indiana Civil Liberties Union, Payne argued that the program's emphasis on character and family relationships could help reverse irresponsible or predatory attitudes toward sex that have become "incredibly common" among today's youth.

Center director Benny McWha says that many of the girls at the center were sexually abused as children, and are considered at high risk of teen pregnancy. Most of the boys come with no experience of responsible fatherhood. Eight mentor families and about a hundred student volunteers work to keep the kids out of trouble.

"Our primary goal is to help teach them character," McWha says, which includes "moral purity from a biblical perspective." The ITC staff also offers practical support—and a message of abstinence—to unmarried mothers in some of the city's toughest neighborhoods.

Modeling the Message

Communicating an effective abstinence message may be the most difficult task facing the mayor, and the city's public schools are becoming a prime battleground. It is here where getting involved sexually is considered a badge of honor. And it is here where more and more pregnant teens are envied, admired, and applauded—but rarely shunned. "In many of our schools," Rush says, "there's a tremendous reward for getting pregnant."

Jackson, who coordinates adolescent-growth programs for the Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis, cites three principles for overturning an ethos of sexual freedom: (1) Give kids a clear message of abstinence until marriage, (2) get the message to them early, and (3) recruit credible high-school students to deliver it.

"There's a real need to have some positive peer pressure for a change," Jackson says. Young people are more likely to listen when student role models get involved. And, contrary to Planned Parenthood's news releases, finding chaste high schoolers is not a problem. Last year, Jackson recruited 200 peer mentors from six Catholic schools and six public schools to lead the workshops. She expects to train at least 50 students from Indianapolis high schools to work with kids in the city's middle schools this fall.

Though Jackson has removed all religious references from her public-school program, the six-hour curriculum parallels its religious counterpart in stressing chastity until marriage. Jackson essentially has translated religious concepts about the benefits of marriage—and the risks of sexual permissiveness—into secular language.

Moreover, most of Jackson's high-school mentors come from strong religious backgrounds. "We're finding that our peer mentors are people of faith," she says. "That faith component is essential, because it gives them a moral standard to live by. Otherwise, it's anything goes."

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Bellwethers of Realignment

Will the surprise election of a Republican majority in the 104th Congress prove to be the first cannonball fired in a full-scale conservative revolution in the federal government, or merely a brief surgical strike to redirect an overreaching president's imprudent agenda? That question, of course, will be determined by the historians.

Regardless of the outcome of the congressional races this November, state legislatures around the country are providing an irrefutable case for an emerging nationwide trend toward a conservative governing philosophy of traditional values, free-market solutions, and smaller government.

Eighteen state legislative chambers have switched from Democratic to Republican control since the 1994 election—either by direct election or their legislators' party-switching. (One of these, the Wisconsin senate, reverted back to Democratic rule, but only after a Republican senator was recalled by voters for his support of a tax increase.)

Pending the elections, legislators are poised in many states to push a conservative agenda.

On the national level, conservatism and its standard bearers in Congress haven't had an easy year. Many voters who were enamored of the ideas of Republican candidates in November 1994 are expressing doubt to pollsters that the person they voted for should remain in office in 1997.

But the important thing to remember is that the left's attack on the 104th Congress has focused on the messenger of conservative government—House Speaker Newt Gingrich—and not the message. To their apparent advantage in polls, challengers to conservative members of congress lambaste their opponents' allegiance to the vilified and unpopular Speaker.

This tactic won't work in state legislative races, where most conservative candidates have never met Gingrich, much less voted with him. State office-seekers are able to separate themselves from the government shutdowns and default threats that haunt many of their federal counterparts and concentrate on the local issues that characterize the devolution of Big Government.

Here are the key states to watch on November 5th for evidence of the conservative agenda's progress:

Florida

Jeb Bush doesn't think it's necessarily the big changes in this state that highlight Florida's growing conservatism. "It's just a continued, constant march towards changing the relationship of government to the people," explains Bush, who came within 2 percentage points of defeating Lawton Chiles for the governorship in 1994. This past legislative session marks the first time since Reconstruction that Florida's senate is Republican-controlled. And come November, the house will go the way of the senate if the GOP can capture three seats. They are very optimistic: 11 of the 12 representatives retiring this year are Democrats, and most are from districts that Bush, the son of President George Bush, carried over Chiles in his narrow loss.

The mainstay of the Democrats' re-election strategy is their no-new-taxes votes and a record of holding growth in the state budget to only 2 percent this session, reports Susan McManus, a professor of public administration and political science at the University of South Florida. "Florida, like the nation at large, has become more conservative over the years," McManus wrote in a recent paper.

"There's no question Florida is shifting to the right, both philosophically and in terms of party registration," says John Smith, the vice president of the James Madison Institute, in Tallahassee. He cites as examples Florida's stringent welfare bill, which is currently awaiting approval from the federal government; tough crime measures; and a new charter-school system. If Republicans take the senate, a school-voucher bill that died during this session has an excellent chance of passage.

Most indicative of the conservatism blossoming in Florida is the slowing of the state spending machine. Since 1983, Smith says, state spending increases averaged $2.4 billion a year. But spending increases in the two most recent budgets have averaged just $500 million. According to Smith, the 1994 state and federal elections and the spending-cap amendment Floridians voted for (also in 1994) are responsible for this encouraging trend.

Iowa

The 1994 electoral tidal wave washed over Iowa's lower chamber, enlarging the Republicans' 51-49 majority to 63-37, but it left the senate in Democratic control by a margin of 27-24. Will the November election be a victory for conservatives in the senate?

"It will give them a Republican majority—but not a conservative influence. That will probably take another election cycle," admits Secretary of State Paul Pate, a Republican and a rising prospect for the governorship. (Governor Terry Branstad is not seeking re-election in 1998.) As a member of the senate from 1989 until 1994, Pate struggled to shepherd conservative bills through his own Republican caucus.

by Bernadette Malone

Bernadette Malone is a national political reporter for Evans & Novak, and a former staffer in the New York state senate.

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But Pate is confident that some of the Republican candidates running to replace retiring Democrats are solid conservatives who will advance the ball next session. The death penalty, parental notification for minors seeking abortions, and regulatory relief are some major issues Iowa conservatives have been pushing, and all have been obstructed by the Democratic senate.

"The senate was the roadblock to getting any tax cuts at all," says Robert Solt, the research director of Iowans for Tax Relief, of the past legislative session. Under GOP rule, the House introduced an income-tax reduction bill that was supported by Branstad, but thwarted by the more liberal senate.

Eventually the senate compromised and passed a property-tax relief bill. Pointing to this year's state budget surplus of $200 million (compared to 1992's $400 million debt), Solt sees ample opportunity for tax cuts next session if Republicans capture the senate. And Pate cites capital gains and inheritance-tax relief as top priorities of the next legislative session, provided Republicans pick up two senate seats and majority control.

Maine

Bethel Furniture Stock, located near Maine's border with New Hampshire, makes wood parts for furniture. Leon Favreau is the firm's president and part owner. Although he doesn't consider himself a conservative, he remarks that the country, and especially Maine, have grown more conservative over recent years. His biggest concern of late is a referendum put on the state ballot by environmentalists that would outlaw the harvesting of trees throughout most of the state. "It has the possibility of forcing our operation to close overnight," he says.

In a state supposedly growing more conservative, how does this threat to the economy gain so much steam? Freshman state representative Lisa Lumbra, a Maine native, explains that residents of the state tend to mind their own business, so the governing is usually left to liberal activists. But a bill passed by the state legislature in 1993 granting special rights to homosexuals served as a wakeup call. A recount after the 1994 election turned control of the senate over to the GOP, and left Republicans in the house one seat shy of a majority.

Lumbra is worried that the senate will not be able to retain its control with the retirement of two conservative stalwarts, but the chances of her party becoming the majority in the house are high. Even as the minority party, house Republicans were able to stop funding for a Goals 2000 bill, pass a 15 percent tax cut pending a budget surplus, and stop a $12 million state health program that covered family planning but not hospitalization costs.

But even if Republicans lose the senate, "the conservative trend will be obvious," Lumbra predicts. There are a few conservative Democrats who will be instrumental in passing a tax cut independent of a budget surplus, deregulating the tree-harvesting industry, and scaling down the state's intrusive Department of Human Services, which Lumbra cites as her constituents' top complaint. Leon Favreau might not consider himself a conservative, but he is voting Republican this year.

Nevada

Serious welfare reform, mirroring Wisconsin governor Tommy Thompson's plan, was stalled in the assembly this year after votes on the bill were cast entirely along party lines. It tied 21-21. In its place, the assembly passed a welfare bill authorizing more money for employment programs and counseling.

Republicans and Democrats have shared the chairmanship over the assembly chamber, which was brought to parity in the 1994 election. All but one of the six representatives retiring this year are Democrats, however, and Republican registration in the state exceeded 50 percent this year for the first time. If all goes as planned, it's round two in Nevada for real welfare reform. Republicans will retain their majority in the senate.

Even if Republicans are unable to take the chamber, "there may be enough external pressure from the president's signature on the federal welfare bill for Democrats to support statewide reform," says Judy Cresanta, the president of the Nevada Policy Research Institute.

Cresanta also thinks that a Republican assembly would take a crack at nepotism in the teachers union and pass property-rights legislation, a winner with voters in a state where 80 percent of the land is owned by the federal government.

And there's good news for Nevadans on the economic front, too. Carol Vilardo, the president of the Nevada Taxpayers' Association, says, "This is the first year we didn't have to go in [to the legislative session] looking to raise taxes." That's because in the 1991 session, the legislature put an end to automatic spending increases for the coming year based on last year's revenues. This is the first year the new policy's effects were felt.

North Carolina

The booming Research Triangle and Charlotte metropolitan areas have attracted many urban Yankees over the past decade, which would lead one to assume that the land of Jesse Helms has taken on a liberal tinge. But judging from the size of the gains Republicans made in the general assembly and state senate in 1994 (when they took over the assembly and wound up two seats shy of a majority in the senate), one is prompted to reconsider.

Grassroots Research, a Charlotte-based public opinion company, recently conducted a poll of 500 registered North Carolina voters and found that 81 percent disapprove of the race-based admissions standards at the University of North Carolina, 76 percent favor a constitutional amendment for congressional term limits, and 74 percent believe that someone who earns twice as much as they do should pay no more than twice as much in taxes. This same sample of voters splits its support between Democratic challenger Harvey Gantt and Republican incumbent Jesse Helms in this year's U.S. Senate race. That indicates that, while North Carolinians have doubts about a person associated with conservative ideas this November, they cling faithfully to a conservative agenda.

"The trend in North Carolina to be

Legislatures from Maine to Florida to Washington are likely to enact tax cuts, pass term limits, and reform welfare.

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more fiscally conservative and certainly more conservative all around has extended to the Republican Party," observes senate Minority Leader Betsy Cochran. She foresees her party capturing a slim majority in the senate this fall. If so, a pilot program for school vouchers has an good chance of passage, tough welfare reform will be introduced, and quite possibly, affirmative action will be addressed in a "methodical, deliberative manner," she says.

These plans depend on Republicans retaining their majority in the Assembly, and at this point "it's very difficult to predict with any accuracy what's going to happen," says John Hood, the president of the John Locke Foundation, a think tank in Raleigh. Hood wonders whether Republicans can effectively make the case for their election to the public, given the popularity that Democratic governor Jim Hunt has won by cutting taxes after the 1994 elections jolted the legislature. If they really want to distinguish themselves from Democrats, Hood says, they need to go after affirmative action. They just might.

Washington

"I know every state claims to be the most liberal in the nation, but we've proved it over the years," laughs Bill Baldwin, the president of the Washington Institute for Policy Studies. But with the prospect of property-tax reduction and regulatory and welfare reform sailing through the legislature next session, Washington is looking a lot different these days.

When asked about his state's facelift, Senator Dan McDonald, the majority leader, suggests it's "probably because the last million to million and a half people who have moved to Washington state are more conservative than the people who were their predecessors." He cites an increase in the number of suburban voters and social conservatives in his state as reasons for this trend.

In 1994, when Republicans picked up 25 house seats (a phenomenon widely attributed to the popularity of the term-limits movement), it was their biggest proportional legislative gain in the country. They control the house 62-36, and are only one seat away for a majority in the senate. Baldwin is optimistic that the policies his think tank endorses will be enacted next year, because twice as many Democrats as Republicans are retiring from the senate this year.

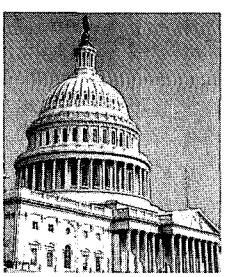
Washingtonians will also elect a governor this year, and if it's a Republican, says Baldwin, there is a good chance that the GOP will be able to repeal the state labor law and start privatizing some of its services. What would another Democratic governor do to Baldwin's agenda? "We'll just put referendum clauses on a lot of these things, bypass the governor, and bring these issues straight to the people," says McDonald.

Wisconsin

The 1994 gains made by the GOP suffered a setback when Republican state senator George Petak was recalled for breaking his promise and voting for a tax increase to fund a sports stadium. The GOP lost its fragile one-seat majority, and now the GOP must protect the assembly and take back the senate. Before Petak's recall, this legislative session's reform-minded agenda had attracted national attention. Governor Tommy Thompson's rise to the vice presidential short-list was due almost entirely to the welfare reform bill passed by the legislature. "Welfare reform never would have come up for a vote under a Democratically controlled legislature . . . but the final vote was overwhelmingly supportive," says Mary Jo Pauke of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce.

Another issue that never would have been addressed is abortion, but under the Republican leadership parental-consent and waiting-period laws were passed into law. Pretty ambitious for one term, but conservatives aren't content to rest on their laurels.

"For the first time in Wisconsin, people are actually going to see their tax bill go down," notes Steve Baas, the communications director for Assembly Majority Leader Scott Jensen. Republicans are campaigning on a $1-billion tax-relief package as next session's legislative centerpiece that would protect the property-tax cut passed this year, eliminate the marriage penalty in the Wisconsin tax code, give working families a tax credit, implement a supermajority rule for tax increases, and provide a 100 percent capital-gains exemption for family farms and business.



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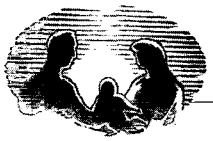

State Groups That Fight for Mom and Dad

by Charmaine Crouse Yoest

Charmaine Crouse Yoest is a contributing editor of Policy Review: The Journal of American Citizenship *and the co-author of* Mother in the Middle: Searching for Peace in the Mommy Wars *(HarperCollins/Zondervan).*

Rudy Gonzalez, a "cowboy poet" with a handlebar mustache and a home-on-the-range accent, strummed his guitar, then launched into a joke. The crowd relaxed into laughter as he regaled them with tall tales and folk wisdom.

This is the Idaho Family Forum's annual summer fundraiser, the Spud Bake, where this group of moms and dads marks the end of summer by eating baked potatoes. Lots of them. Followed by spud-shaped ice cream.

But cowboy poetry soon gave way to public policy. U.S. Senator Larry Craig rose to address the group, and the question-and-answer session that followed was brisk and well informed. The Idaho Family Forum (IFF) and its supporters are dedicated to changing cultural trends that are undermining the stability of families—from no-fault divorce to teen pregnancy to chronic welfare dependency.

Led by executive director Dennis Mansfield, a former businessman, the IFF is part of a growing national movement of independent, state-based policy organizations called Family Policy Councils (FPCs). There are now more than 30 such organizations across the country, loosely affiliated by shared goals, common strategies, and mutual support. In order to win the ears of lawmakers, the media, and academics, they prefer research over rallies and education over activism.

"We are involved in an intellectually muscular and principled persuasion—almost like miniature *Crossfires* across the nation," says Mansfield. "We're not going to back down from anybody but we're going to use principled persuasion. We believe the weight of the facts wins the day."

Like other FPC leaders, Mansfield is a familiar sight in the halls of his state capitol. But there's more to the movement than old-fashioned buttonholing. Legislative battles are really the "outworking of . . . intellectual battles," says Matt Daniels, the executive director of the Massachusetts Family Institute. That means fighting those battles at both the popular and academic levels—from public-service announcements about the benefits of fatherhood to thick policy papers on the social consequences of divorce.

Steve Knudsen, the director of state and local affairs at the Family Research Council, in Washington, D.C., says that the FPCs exemplify the Jeffersonian ideal of the states as "laboratories of democracy." Now, in the era of devolution—the shifting of resources and responsibility out of Washington—they are strategically placed.

"Our focus is on the long term," says Gary Palmer, the executive director of the Alabama Family Alliance. "We work on building relationships with policy-makers. We want to be the ones they turn to when they need accurate, reliable information." In more and more states around the country, FPCs and their staff are playing precisely that role. They advise governors and help craft legislation, they appear on talk shows and write syndicated columns, and they recruit the business and professional community as board members and supporters.

In the last decade, 25 new family policy councils have been established, and have been deeply involved in some of their states' most significant battles over policy. The following are a few of their success stories:

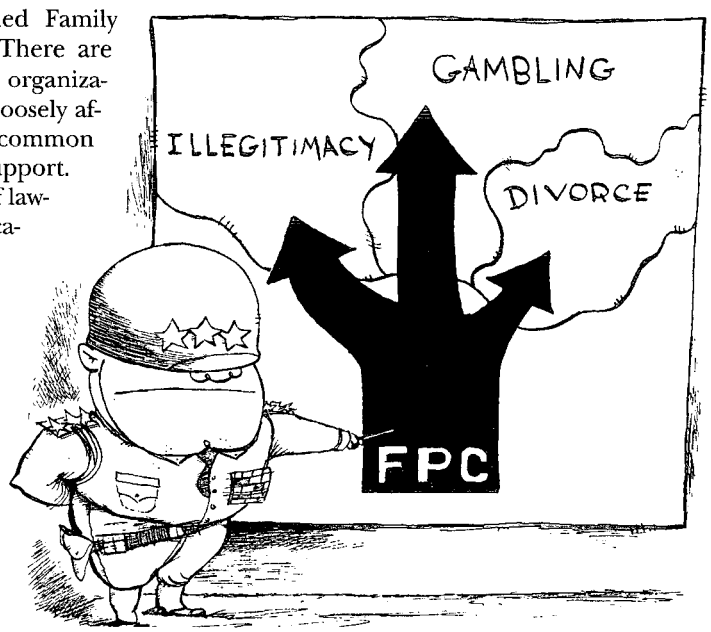

Illustration by David Clark

Faulting No-Fault Divorce

With 14 full-time staff and a budget of $1.3 million, the Michigan Family Forum is a leader among the FPCs. Its director is Randy Hekman, a former family-court judge with 12 children of his own.

MFF laid the groundwork for divorce reform in Michigan in 1995, helping to ignite a similar reform revolution in states across the nation. In the fall, communications director Brian Willats drafted a report called "Breaking Up is Easy To Do: A Look at No-Fault Divorce in the State of Michigan."

Filled with research documenting the consequences of family breakdown, it called for a return to the traditional fault system of divorce, except in cases of mutual consent in which minor children are not involved. Perhaps most important, the report called for a "children first" attitude in divorce considerations.

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The report was released at a legislative breakfast later that year and produced headlines across the state. State Representative Jessie Dalman then introduced divorce-reform legislation that incorporated the forum's recommendations. The bill became national news: "Michigan could set off a divorce counterrevolution," said the *Wall Street Journal.* Dalman's bill was noted by the *New York Times, Newsweek,* the *Los Angeles Times,* and *USA Today.* Although the bill failed this year by a single vote, the Michigan Family Forum helped set the terms of what is now a national debate.

Ads for Dads

The voice is a dead giveaway. With that familiar, dynamic, raspy Kempian voice, Jeff Kemp couldn't escape identification as the son of the Republican vice presidential nominee if he wanted to. Kemp has followed his father—first into professional football, and now into politics—but Jeff has put his own imprimatur on political activism since taking the helm of the Washington Family Council (WFC), an organization with eight full-time employees and a budget of $600,000.

Before helping his father campaign, Kemp was busy barnstorming the state promoting the WFC's Fatherhood Initiative. Patterned on the National Fatherhood Initiative, the WFC's effort began with a statewide media barrage about the virtues of being a father. "We wanted to raise the bar for fatherhood," explains Randy Hicks, the WFC's associate director. They ran well-received radio ads produced by James Dobson's Focus on the Family and print ads created by the Family Research Council. Both were tailored to address Washington state concerns. ABC's TV affiliate in Seattle soon invited Kemp to join a panel discussion with David Blankenhorn, a leading authority on fatherhood and the author of *Fatherless America.*

So far, there is no legislative component to the initiative, but the campaign has had far-reaching results. The TV station was flooded with more than 500 calls—more than it had ever received for any program. WFC prepared "fatherhood packets"—information about how to strengthen the vital role of fathers in their families—for these callers. The station then asked the WFC to produce a public-service announcement on fatherhood.

Soon Kemp and Hicks were traveling the state, meeting with managers of television stations to promote the PSA. Eventually every network affiliate in the state (at least a dozen stations) ran the ad. One station alone donated more than $250,000 in air time; a Seattle station was running the ad four times a day.

Attacking Fluffy Education

The Family Foundation in Lexington, Kentucky, has established itself as an effective voice for conservative pro-family values, particularly in education. Since 1990, with the passage of the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA), education has been one of the state's most controversial issues. The reason: The Kentucky education establishment used the Act to introduce outcome-based education and new tests without objective measures and to eliminate grades in primary schools. These "reforms" occurred without parental involvement and have been heralded by the national education establishment as a model reform effort.

The foundation launched the state's most potent criticism of the reforms. It insisted that the legislation's "Academic Expectations" component—a list of 57 goals that serve as academic standards—was "vague, non-academic, and unmeasurable."

The foundation's arsenal consisted of carefully crafted arguments—among them a pamphlet comparing the state goals with standards based on work by former Secretary of Education William Bennett. Policy analyst Martin Cothran produced a blizzard of material for parents and policy-makers. The *Lexington Herald-Leader* profiled Cothran, calling him the leader of the opposition. Soon, Kentuckians saw newspaper headlines that read "Proof that KERA works still lacking" and "Discontent with KERA growing." In February, Governor Paul Patton established a task force to study whether the reforms were working.

Changing the law is the ultimate goal, but in the meantime, the foundation is happy to have changed the terms of the debate. "If all we had done was to change the law," says executive director Kent Ostrander, "I would be afraid the results wouldn't be long-term."

Betting Against Gambling

Gary Palmer is another leader working behind the scenes to change his state. A former cost analyst for an engineering company, Palmer is an intense and compelling man with a thousand ideas—half of which, it seems, he's on his way to achieving. In six years, he has built the Alabama Family Alliance into a $685,000 organization with a full-time staff of 10. "I believe in finding the best people and giving them the opportunity to excel," he says. His group has been so effective that Governor Fob James picked off two of the Family Alliance's top staffers. Palmer hires Ph.D.s for his policy slots and has a first-rate legal staff.

He uses them to great strategic effect. This year the alliance grappled with the gaming industry. Gambling is illegal in Alabama, and the state house of representatives, where all revenue bills must originate, does not favor legalization. So when gambling interests targeted Mobile for expansion this year, they backed a legalization bill written as if it were not a revenue bill, and then introduced it in the state senate.

Palmer did not organize any rallies or demonstrations. But he and his staff were ready. Working with a pro-family senator, the alliance helped draft a request for a legal ruling from the state attorney general on the admissibility of a "non-revenue" gambling bill in the senate. The alliance's legal staff shared its extensive research on the case law with the attorney general, who then ruled that the legislation was a revenue bill and could not be introduced in the senate. It was quickly killed.

Policy analyst John Hill prepared a concise assessment of the economic and social costs of gambling. The report exposed state lotteries as a net loss for states using it to bring in revenue. As a result, the mayor of Mobile commissioned 41 local social-service agencies, including the American Red Cross and the United Way, to study the "social impact of gaming."

The conclusion? Fifteen million dollars in extra social-service costs to the city. "An increase in problems and demand for services attributable to gambling abuse or addiction will adversely affect the quality of life in Mobile for all its residents," the final report stated.

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Family Policy Councils

Alabama—*Alabama Family Alliance.* (See article.)
☎ Gary Palmer at 205-870-9900.

Arizona—*Center for Arizona Policy.* Helped pass a same-sex marriage ban, parental consent for abortion, and two bills restricting pornography. Coming initiatives: informed consent for abortion, divorce reform.
☎ Len Munsil at 602-922-3101.

Arkansas—*Arkansas Family Council.* Working on a 17-bill pro-family agenda for the new governor, including income tax indexed to inflation and popular election of school boards.
☎ Jerry Cox at 501-664-4566.

California—*Capitol Resource Institute.* Working on divorce reform, a fatherhood initiative, and a same-sex marriage ban.
☎ Mike Bowman at 916-498-1940.

Colorado—*Rocky Mountain Family Council.* Developed the "Marriage Project" to increase awareness of the effects of no-fault divorce, establish mentoring and counseling programs, and craft a legislative agenda.
☎ Tom McMillen at 303-456-9285.

Florida—*Florida Family Council.* Promoted fatherhood campaign; working on education, welfare, divorce reform.
☎ Mark Merritt at 813-222-8300.

Georgia—*Georgia Family Council.*
☎ Gayle Swanburg at 770-242-0001.

Idaho—*Idaho Family Forum.* Helped pass "defense of marriage" legislation.
☎ Dennis Mansfield at 208-376-9009.

Illinois—*Illinois Family Institute.* Working on state curriculum standards, a fatherhood initiative, and a law requiring parental involvement in a minor's abortion.
☎ Joe Clark at 708-790-8370.

Indiana—*Indiana Family Institute.* Working on education, welfare, and divorce reform.
☎ Bill Smith at 317-582-0300.

Kansas—*Kansas Family Research Institute.* Developing public-service announcements extolling fatherhood; promotes abstinence-based sex-ed programs.
☎ David Payne at 316-634-2622.

Kentucky—*The Family Foundation.* (See article.)
☎ Kent Ostrander at 606-255-5400.

Maine—*Christian Civic League.* Helped defeat outcome-based education legislation. Working on parental-rights legislation and a ban on same-sex marriage.
☎ Michael Heath at 207-622-7634.

Massachusetts—*Massachusetts Family Institute.* Promotes divorce reform and parental rights, opposes euthanasia movement.
☎ Matt Daniels at 617-928-0800.

Michigan—*Michigan Family Forum.* (See article.)
☎ Charlie Nunez at 517-374-1171.

Minnesota—*Minnesota Family Council.* Promotes school choice and opposes campaigns to redefine family.
☎ Tom Prichard at 612-789-8811.

Mississippi—*Mississippi Family Council.* Working on charter-school legislation.
☎ Forest Thigpen at 601-969-1200.

Missouri—*Family Policy Center.* Helped pass a law defining marriage exclusively as the union of one man and one woman. Working on legislation promoting abstinence-based sex education.
☎ Paul Scianna at 816-943-1776.

North Carolina—*North Carolina Family Policy Council.* Helped pass abstinence-based sex-ed law. Promotes school choice, charter schools.
☎ Bill Brooks at 919-834-4090.

North Dakota—*North Dakota Family Alliance.* Helped thwart appropriations for Goals 2000. Planning a fatherhood initiative.
☎ Clinton Birst at 701-223-3575.

Pennsylvania—*Pennsylvania Family Institute.* Issued report on no-fault divorce that helped spark divorce-reform legislation now under consideration. Working on legislation defining marriage exclusively as the union of one man and one woman.
☎ Mike Geer at 717-545-0600.

South Carolina—*Palmetto Family Council.* Only organization to testify against school-based clinics in public schools, resulting in tabling of school health bill.
☎ Steve Suits at 803-731-4313.

South Dakota—*South Dakota Family Policy Council.* First state to pass legislation defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman. Developing divorce reform and welfare reform.
☎ John Paulton at 605-335-8100.

Tennessee—*Family Institute.* Helped pass same-sex marriage ban, and Families First welfare-reform package. Working on legislation eliminating no-fault divorce when children are present.
☎ Jeff Whitesides at 615-254-3917.

Texas—*Free Market Foundation.* Promoting law requiring abortion clinics to meet same medical standards as same-day surgery centers.
☎ Candi Cushman at 972-680-9171.

Virginia—*The Family Foundation.* Helped defeat gambling legislation. Waging public education campaign opposing Goals 2000.
☎ George Tryfiatis at 703-273-9555.

Washington—*Washington Family Council.* (See article.)
☎ Jeff Kemp at 206-637-5959.

Wisconsin—*Family Research Institute of Wisconsin.* Helped defeat legislation outlawing reasonable parental discipline measures, including spanking. Promoting bill requiring parental permission for school surveys on private family information.
☎ Marvin Munyon at 608-256-3228.

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Free at Last

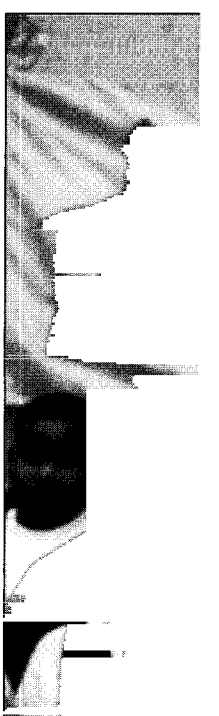
Black America Signs up for School Choice

By Nina Shokraii

A **powerful** grass-roots movement is slowly gathering force that may transform the politics of American education. Its human face is not white but black; its resources few but its determination strong. And its goal is freedom. Although most black political leaders still actively oppose vouchers and charter schools, their constituents are growing increasingly angry at the public schools' disastrous record of teaching black children. As a result, black parents, pastors, local officials, and civil-rights leaders are beginning to embrace school vouchers, charter schools, and other reforms that offer alternatives to dismal public schools.

These African Americans believe that academic achievement is the key to their economic independence. They want schools that involve them in their children's education while imposing high standards and strict discipline, and they reject the notion that poverty somehow renders parents less interested in their children's academic well-being. As their numbers swell, teachers unions will find it increasingly difficult to hold back reforms that offer black children a better chance.

This new movement is already spreading throughout the country. In Cleveland, African Americans like councilwoman Fannie Lewis, school principals Lydia Harris and Sister Hasina Renee, and school-board member Genevieve Mitchell led the fight for a new state law that provides vouchers this fall for 2,000 low-income children. Lewis, Harris, Renee, and Mitchell vigorously supported Republican governor George Voinovich as he moved his voucher proposal through the state legislature. Lewis recruited 300 citizens in her neighborhood of Hough, the site of race riots in 1968, to travel to Columbus to lobby for the scholarship program. Last fall, when the governor's staff organized a press conference to announce the signing of the bill, jubilant black students and their parents packed the hallways and aisles.



In fact, support for vouchers in Cleveland was so strong that nearly 6,300 students, almost all of them black, applied for only 2,000 slots, which were filled by lottery. By mid-September of this year, 1,410 of the students had enrolled in a religious school. Councilwoman Lewis, a mother and 46-year Cleveland resident, attributes this flight to public schools' dismal educational record and indifference to parents. "The quality of public schools in Hough is poor," she says. "The roofs leak and the schools sometimes lack books, chairs, and other materials. Of the more than $7,000 spent on each child in the Cleveland public schools, only a fraction goes to classroom education." Thanks to vouchers, this fall Lewis was

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able to open her own community school, the Hough-Brooks Academy for Higher Learning—a nonsectarian school run by a community board with a curriculum emphasizing the arts and cultural awareness. Lewis hopes this will "force school officials to pay more attention to parents' concerns and to provide safer and better schools."

In Milwaukee, as Dan McGroarty has shown in his new book, *Break These Chains*, blacks have been the principal supporters of two Wisconsin voucher programs. "The battle for Parental Choice," McGroarty writes, "began in the church basements and meeting halls of Milwaukee's Near North Side," a poor neighborhood where only 48 percent of adults hold a job. "From the start, the Milwaukee proponents' language was appropriated from the civil-rights movement. Their rhetoric was more redolent of Martin Luther King Jr. than the free-market pronouncements favored by conservative voucher proponents."

The engineer of Milwaukee's first voucher plan, which was limited to nonsectarian schools, was Annette "Polly" Williams, a black Democratic state representative from the Near North Side. Having fought the school system a dozen years earlier for busing her daughter to a bad public school, Williams was familiar with the Milwaukee education establishment's indifference to the needs of low-income black families. "The system is the system. It doesn't care. It doesn't feel," Williams told McGroarty. "The way I saw it, [it] is preparing our children for slavery. Look at the situation: Drop out by 10th grade, get into the street life. When you should be walking across the stage getting a diploma, you're standing in front of a judge wearing chains."

Committed to breaking up the system for the sake of the young black children in her community, Williams gradually mobilized her army of mothers and grandmothers, most of whom were on welfare, and all of whom were determined to "do right by their children." Aware of her army's powerful impact on lawmakers, she convinced the chairman of the state assembly's urban-education committee to hold a public hearing on her school-choice plan on the morning of February 23, 1990. The three-hour-long hearing, which attracted 200 low-income minority parents and children, prompted the committee to approve her proposal. Soon thereafter, it passed the assembly and the senate and was signed into law by Republican governor Tommy Thompson.

Throughout the endeavor, only one local newspaper captured Williams's crusade in a concise and accurate way: *Community Journal*, whose editor, Mikel Holt, is yet another fan of school choice. As for Milwaukee's mainstream dailies, McGroarty notes, "they attacked Williams repeatedly. One went as far as portraying her in a cartoon as a stick-up artist pointing a pistol at a public-school teacher."

Having survived a grueling round of constitutional scrutiny, the program generated so much support that in September 1994, 750 mostly low-income blacks rallied for its expansion. This time, a new generation of African-American educators joined Williams in the battle. They included Zakiya Courtney, then principal of the Urban Day School and now the director of a grass-roots group called Parents for School Choice; Brother Bob Smith, the principal of the outstanding inner-city school Messmer High; and Howard Fuller, then superintendent of Milwaukee public schools. Last year, the school board and the teachers unions mailed 3,000 videotapes attacking Fuller's stance on choice, calling it an attempt to scale back or completely cut educational programs. The unions succeeded in establishing an anti-reform majority on the board of education, which prompted Fuller's resignation.

But according to a February 1995 report by the Wisconsin Policy Research Institute, 95 percent of African Americans polled in Milwaukee support school choice, and 70 percent believe that students in private and religious schools get a better education than students in the Milwaukee public schools. Finally ceding to their constituents' demands, the Wisconsin legislature last year expanded the program to include religious schools, increased the number of vouchers

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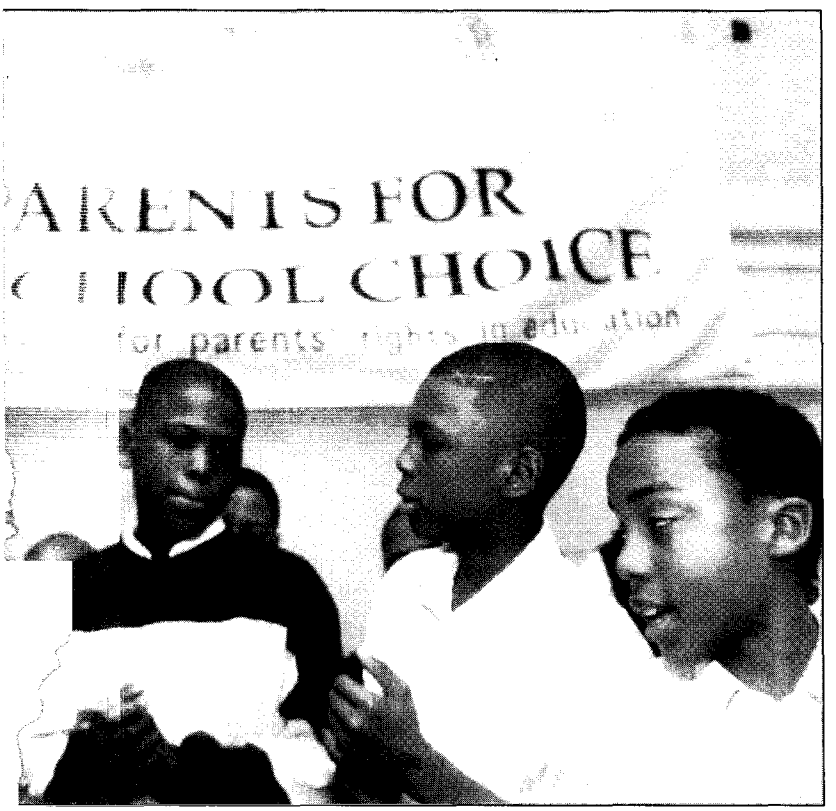

Photo by Andy Manis

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from 1,500 to 15,000, and eliminated restrictions on the number of choice students in participating schools. In response, voucher opponents immediately and successfully sought an injunction from the courts and have, so far, blocked the plan's implementation.

The parents, however, are equally determined. In February 1996, for instance, Courtney filled nine buses with 500 mostly black parents and children to attend a rally at the capitol, in Madison. There they voiced their enthusiasm for the newly enacted plan, which was being challenged in the Wisconsin Supreme Court. After a tie vote, the court sent the case back to trial court, where Dane County Circuit Judge Paul Higginbotham refused to lift the injunction blocking religious schools' participation in the program. "The state cannot do indirectly what it can't do directly," he said.

Higginbotham did allow the state to issue up to 15,000 vouchers for private nonreligious schools. But Courtney and Milwaukee's parents eagerly await the day the court will grant them complete authority over the upbringing of their children—including the freedom to send them to a religious school. Meanwhile, 4,500 low-income Milwaukee students are going to religious schools this year with privately financed vouchers—thanks to the generosity of the Bradley Foundation and 1,040 private donors who gave more than $4 million to help the students hurt by Higginbotham's decision.

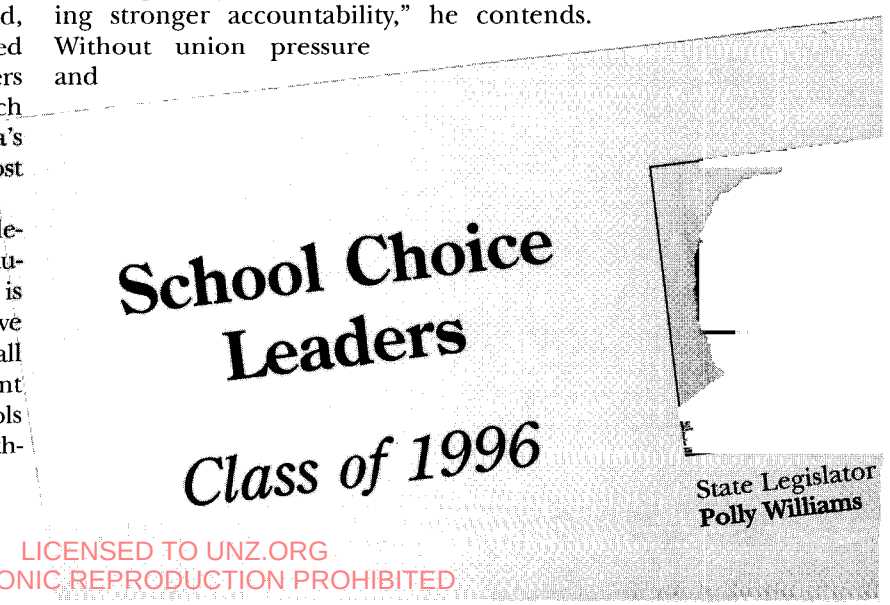
In Florida, T. Willard Fair, the president and chief executive officer of the liberal Urban League of Miami, and the Reverend R.B. Holmes, a black Baptist pastor from Tallahassee, are the principal supporters of a new charter school law enacted in April. The Florida plan allows any creative educator to open a school, free of the red tape that binds most public schools (such as teacher certification and state-imposed standards). Fair formed a partnership with Jeb Bush, the conservative Republican candidate for governor in 1994, to advance the legislation. Fair described public schools as "too regulated, entrenched in bureaucracy, with overcrowded classrooms, out-of-control children, and teachers who are not held accountable due to too much union interference." And so he created Florida's first charter school, whose student body is almost entirely low-income and African-American.

Similarly, Holmes opened the C.K. Steele-Leroy Collins charter middle school, with a student body that is 75 percent black. His school is modeled after a Christian academy he created five years ago, which he describes as a school that "all people, [whether] black, white, rich, or poor want to send their kids to." To Holmes, charter schools mean "freedom to teach reading, writing, arithmetic, respect, responsibility, and entrepreneurship all in one—without the bureaucratic strings attached." A 1995 survey by the Foundation for Florida's Future found that Florida's black citizens supported school choice and charter schools by 68 percent and 63 percent, respectively.

In California, voucher supporters include Anyam Palmer, the principal of the Afrocentric Marcus Garvey School in South Central Los Angeles, who views "the present school system [as] the vehicle that puts us on welfare, in prison, and leaves us illiterate. . . . School choice is the only way out of this vicious cycle." "Public education is not working for most minority citizens in the inner city," says Bishop George D. McKinney Jr. of San Diego, who has set up a school at St. Stephen's Church of God in Christ. Testifying for vouchers last year before the House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth, and Families, McKinney faulted public schools for "low expectations . . . of minority students" and "the systematic tracking of minority students toward nonacademic programs." A recent survey of South Central's residents by the Center for the Study of Popular Culture found that 77 percent of minorities supported vouchers.

Californians may not win the right to vouchers in the near future, but an innovative charter-school law, passed in 1992, offers blacks a close alternative. According to the Hudson Institute, the California plan gives "charter petitioners the right to seek significant autonomy from local board control [and provides] a blanket waiver from most state laws and regulations." Jonathan Williams, the black principal of the Accelerated School, in South Central Los Angeles, says that a charter-school system offers "more freedom, choice, and responsibility." Accelerated's student body comprises 50 percent blacks and 50 percent Hispanics; a majority of students belong to low or low-moderate income groups.

Williams believes charter schools are the solution to the educational crisis. "With charters you can keep the system public and free, while instilling stronger accountability," he contends. Without union pressure and



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handouts, "I feel like a professional instead of a wage earner." Williams's school sits in a gang-infested neighborhood. "It is not unusual for us to hear gun fights, and notice the residues of drug abuse around the school grounds," he says. But with a low student-to-teacher ratio, lots of parental involvement, and zero tolerance toward violence and drugs, Williams avoids the problems that incapacitate many public schools every year.

In Michigan, the TEACH Michigan Education Fund reports that black educators have launched one out of every three Michigan charter schools. According to Bryan Taylor, the fund's executive director, "5,000 applicants applied for 330 spots when the first charter school came to Detroit; African-American educators led most of them." In Michigan, where charter schools are called "public-school academies," the law allows any individual or group to develop a charter and to seek sponsorship from a variety of entities such as the board of a state public university. The program's key supporters include black leaders like the Reverend Ned Adams Jr., an official of the Council of Baptist Pastors, which assists member churches in Detroit interested in starting charter schools; and Larry Patrick, the former president of the Detroit Board of Education and an avid advocate "for parents having as many choices as possible for the education of their children."

Another black charter-school fan is Freya Rivers. The frustrated former Lansing public-school teacher now serves as district superintendent, full-time language-arts teacher, and part-time janitor and nurse. Her school, the Sanfoka Shule charter school in Lansing, targets at-risk elementary school students. In an article for the *Wall Street Journal* earlier this year, she wrote, "I have two students who were [in special education in traditional Lansing public schools]. They couldn't even write their names or recognize any words. . . I use the same methods to teach them that I use with the other students. Now both of them are writing sentences." In fact, 85 percent of the first- and second-graders Sanfoka received from Lansing public schools were illiterate; now all are able to read.

In Texas, ardent African-American voucher promoters include Democratic state representative Glenn Lewis, the former general counsel for the Tarrant County chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and his liberal legislative colleague Ron Wilson. Fueled by support from a growing number of black churches, including the Reverend Raymond Bryant's Union Center African Methodist Episcopal Church, in Conroe, the leaders foresee a strong chance to enact school choice in their state next year. A 1995 Texas Poll showed black support for vouchers at 59 percent, and a growing number of church groups, ministers, and community groups also believe vouchers are the next step. Says Michael Williams, a black conservative and former assistant education secretary in the Bush administration, "The [African-American] community looks to choice as the vehicle to reclaim control over the learning of the next generation of African-American scholars and leaders." Allan Parker, the president of the Texas Justice Foundation, whose group has convened a citizens' task force to investigate why Texas minority students fare worse than whites on the state's achievement tests, works closely with these leaders in promoting school choice.

All of these low-income parents and community leaders seek the same opportunities for their children that middle- and upper-income black parents enjoy. "I don't think African-American parents are any different than other parents," says Michigan's Larry Patrick. "All they want is quality education for their children. Wealthy parents, like the president, can make this choice; poor ones cannot. . . . Most African-American leaders [seem to] practice choice in their own lives and support [it] on a personal level." Denis Doyle, a senior fellow with The Heritage Foundation, notes that black teachers are twice as likely as other black parents to send their children to a private school, and 30 percent of Congressional Black Caucus members with children send their children to private schools. Meanwhile, only 4 percent of blacks possess the means to exercise this option.

Perhaps this is why a poll by the left-leaning Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies in April 1996 reveals that African Americans favor school choice more strongly than the general population. Support registers highest among women (51 percent), parents (61 per-

School Principal
Brother Bob Smith

Community Activist
Zakiya Courtney

City Councilwoman
Fannie Lewis

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At Milwaukee's Holy Redeemer Academy, low-income black parents and commun leaders seek the same opportunities that middle- and upper-income black parents enjoy.

Photo by Mark Hoffman

cent), and younger African Americans (64 percent among 18- to 25-year-olds, 61 percent among 26- to 35-year-olds). These numbers are particularly telling when you consider that only 18 percent of blacks support the devolving of power from the federal government to the state and local levels. Says Brian Jones, the president of the Center for New Black Leadership, they reflect "a stalwart trend towards reclaiming the power of parents."

With respect to charter schools, the Hudson Institute's Educational Excellence Network recently reported similar positive conclusions. The report finds a high level of satisfaction with charter schools among most students, and cites the schools' clear academic expectations, safety, individualized instruction, committed teachers, and familial atmosphere. Hudson found that 63 percent of the students attending charter schools nationwide belong to a racial minority—including 19 percent who are African-American—and that 55 percent are poor.

What drives African Americans toward choice and charter schools? Standards, discipline, and parental involvement are the three core reasons.

Joyce Watkins, a resident of Chicago's West Side and a mother of seven, wants higher academic standards and eagerly hopes her city will adopt some form of school choice soon. "Where I'm from," she says, "public education offers leftovers. It means getting lost in the cracks." What frustrates Watkins the most is public-school teachers' lack of interest in her children's academic achievement. "They come home without homework sometimes," she laments. "The quality of education is really low. . . . I often wonder if teachers and school counselors even know my children's names, since they are too busy disciplining unruly students." Watkins would prefer sending her children to Providence St. Mel, a Catholic school in her neighborhood, even though she belongs to a different Christian denomination. "If they gave us more choices, more kids would go to school, stay in school, and graduate to college. . . . You would also see the crime rate go down because the kids would be in class, not on the streets. . . . That's where the opportunity lies."

Gloria Grayson, a mother in Milwaukee whose two daughters now attend a private school, abhors the absence of strict disciplinary guidelines in public schools. "They were not learning. Classes were large and pupil-to-teacher ratios were high," she says. "The children were afraid and could not concentrate because they had to deal with their undisciplined peers rather than listen and learn in class. Teachers were not able or did not try to maintain adequate control over their classes. As a result, classes progressed slowly. Teachers and administrators had nothing but excuses for the poor education my children were receiving. The . . . schools are filled with drugs and violence. They graduate drug dealers. At best, children leave those schools not with a diploma, but with battle scars."

Grayson and Watkins join other parents and educators in blaming the education system's lack of interest in their concerns. After all, as Cleveland councilwoman Fannie Lewis notes, "parents have little influence over education policy. The school board often will go into executive session to shut out community attendance at its meetings." Texas legislator Glenn Lewis, whose constituents show their anger by picketing out-

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side school-board meetings, concurs. He considers choice a means to provide parents with more leverage over the school boards and "an opportunity to improve public schools . . . because so long as they are guaranteed our parents' dollars, they have no incentives to listen." According to a poll by the Center for Education Reform, 61 percent of blacks say "the quality of their public school could be improved a great deal," compared with 44 percent of the general population.

To find those key ingredients of a good education, black parents often gravitate towards religious education. As Fannie Lewis observes, "in most instances [the parents'] decisions have nothing to do with religion. They want their children in a safe environment with strong disciplinary standards where they can get a good education." Sectarian schools constitute 85 percent of all private schools; of that share, more than half are Catholic. Others include religious schools run by Baptists, Lutherans, Seventh-Day Adventists, and Muslims. These schools, especially in urban areas, enroll growing numbers of ethnic minority students, according to the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). NCEA also reports that in the last 20 years, the minority percentages have more than doubled in all Catholic schools, from 10.8 percent in 1970-71 to 23.5 percent in 1992-93.

Bob Smith, the veteran superintendent of Milwaukee's Messmer High School, a Catholic school, attests to these facts. "Catholic schools have been known for high-quality education since the black migration from the South. For many years, next to public schools, they were the only safe haven for blacks in the segregation era." He proudly cites the St. Benedict the Moor School, known today as the Urban Day School, as an example. The black all-male boarding school boasts a number of high-profile alumni, including Dizzy Gillespie, the jazz musician; Harold Washington, the first black mayor of Chicago; and Redd Foxx, the comedian and television star. Catholic schools are popular with parents, Smith says, because they are "safe havens against drugs, violence, and uncaring teachers."

A forthcoming study in the *Journal of Labor Economics* supports the believers in religious schooling by revealing that those most likely to benefit from a Catholic-school education are minorities, many of whom are not Catholic, who attend big-city schools. The paper's author, University of Chicago economist Derek Neal, observes that "in the urban minority sample, Catholic schooling dramatically increases the probability of high school graduation . . . [and increases] college graduation rates." According to Neal, that translates into future wage gains. Among the study's sample of urban blacks and Hispanics, the probability of graduating from high school rises from 62 percent to at least 88 percent when the public-school students are placed in a Catholic secondary school. "For urban whites," he continues, "the effects are . . . always smaller in magnitude. In fact, [their] estimated wage gain from Catholic schooling is not statistically different." Neal concludes that "urban minority students benefit most from access to Catholic schools because their local public-school alternatives are poor."

Perhaps this explains why New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani recently urged educators to use the city's Catholic schools as a "guide" to reforms. He noted in a *Wall Street Journal* article in 1995 that the city's Catholic and public schools enroll about the same proportion of students with multiple risk factors, but that Catholic schools have a dropout rate of 0.1 percent, compared with 18 percent in the public schools. Giuliani also observed that, despite popular belief, Catholic schools have expulsion rates of only 2 percent. The mayor has recently proposed a measure allowing students performing in the bottom 5 percent to attend religious schools.

Furthermore, a recent report by Jay Greene of the University of Houston and Paul Peterson of Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government fortifies the supporters of choice. This study demonstrates, for the first time, that students participating in the Milwaukee choice experiment, 70 percent of whom are African American, made major academic improvements compared with a control group in public schools. In fact, after three years, the gap between the test scores of whites and minorities narrowed by 33 to 50 percent.

Standards, discipline, and parental involvement are pulling black parents toward school choice.

Despite the growing black support for vouchers, the civil-rights establishment and most black leaders in Congress and state legislatures remain steadfastly opposed. Their explanations range from fears of losing their best students to private schools (so-called creaming) and segregation to concerns that private schools will soak up public funds. Jessica Butler, a spokesperson for the Greater Harrisburg branch of the NAACP, exclaims "tuition vouchers are just the latest scheme for abandoning our public schools." Michael Myers, the president and executive director of the New York Civil Rights Coalition, says, "School choice is a gimmick. There is no such

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thing as school choice for children who don't have a choice," since private schools get to select the types of students they like.

Militant opposition to choice may also stem from the influence of large, monied teachers unions, which see any choice outside the public schools as a threat to their monopoly. Teachers unions adamantly opposed a small school-choice plan tagged to Congress's District of Columbia appropriations bill last fall. After it passed overwhelmingly in the House of Representatives, the plan died in the Senate, despite the support of local leaders like Franklin Smith, the city's schools superintendent, and Mayor Marion Barry. Throughout the proceedings, District of Columbia delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton and the Congressional Black Caucus sided with the unions and refused to endorse school choice for the city's neediest children. Explaining her reasons for opposing the modest school choice proposal, Norton told the *Washington Post* on November 3, 1995, "It's not about money, it's about the strong feeling in the District that District schools are where most of the children are going to be, so we need to spend money fixing up our schools."

"School choice creams the public schools of their best students, and robs them of their much needed funds for educating the needy kids left behind," explains Daniel E. Katz, legal counsel for the Washington office of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). "Choice also raises the specter of segregation." But as Cleveland's Lydia Harris, principal of one of the nation's best private schools, can attest, this description is inaccurate. In a recent article in *World* magazine, she writes, "There's no cream on my crop until we put it there. It's a myth that we take discipline problems and throw them out of school. It's the other way around. I get the kids the public schools can't handle." And she does all this at a per-pupil cost one-seventh that of Cleveland public schools.

"Choice is just a subterfuge for segregation, like it was in the South," says Felmers Chaney, the head of the Milwaukee NAACP, which joined the lawsuit against the initial Milwaukee school-choice plan as lead plaintiff. "Taken as a whole, expanded [school choice] will deny African Americans equal educational opportunity," asserted Chaney in a recent brief against the expanded Milwaukee school-choice plan. To many of its black critics, the NAACP seems more concerned with integration than with quality education for black children. Even so, opponents of vouchers need only examine the work of the late James Coleman, of the University of Chicago, which shows not only that poor black youngsters fare better in religious schools than in public schools, but also that a child is more likely to attend school with a child of another race in the private sector than in the public sector. As for the Milwaukee plan, the NAACP ought to take a look at the high level of integration in Milwaukee private schools in comparison to its public schools.

Some critics argue that the education establishment opposes school choice for a very basic reason: self-preservation. "Perhaps one of the strongest reasons why the civil-rights establishment opposes choice is economic," says Brian Jones. "They strongly feel that competition and privatization will leave them out in the cold." Public schools employ a large portion of the African-American professional community; some of them may view school choice and charter schools as programs designed to rob them of tenured jobs. To convince public-school employees that market forces will provide jobs for the best teachers and administrators from these public schools is next to impossible. Of course, as Milwaukee's Zakiya Courtney points, the number of kids in the school system won't shrink. "This won't impact the teachers," she says. "It will only affect the pencil pushers."

School choice and charter schools are becoming the civil-rights movement of the 1990s.

Will saving jobs justify depriving innocent children of a quality education? To answer this question, these leaders ought to talk to students and their parents, visit the neighborhood private schools these children could go to, and perform a cost-benefit analysis of the savings associated with sending children to these schools. "Once you do this, you can't help but become a believer in school choice," says Messmer's Smith.

School choice is the civil-rights movement of the 1990s. Says Milwaukee's Polly Williams, "I am one of those people who is supposed to be very stupid because I am black, I live in the inner city, I am poor, and I raised my children in a single parent home. Well, those are lies. The only thing different about us is that we have been deprived of resources and access. When you empower parents like me, there is a major difference. We become responsible for our own lives. . . . We want to be empowered, and that is what the choice program has done."

Nina Shokraii *is the director of outreach programs at the Institute for Justice, a nonprofit, nonpartisan public-interest law firm in Washington, D.C.*

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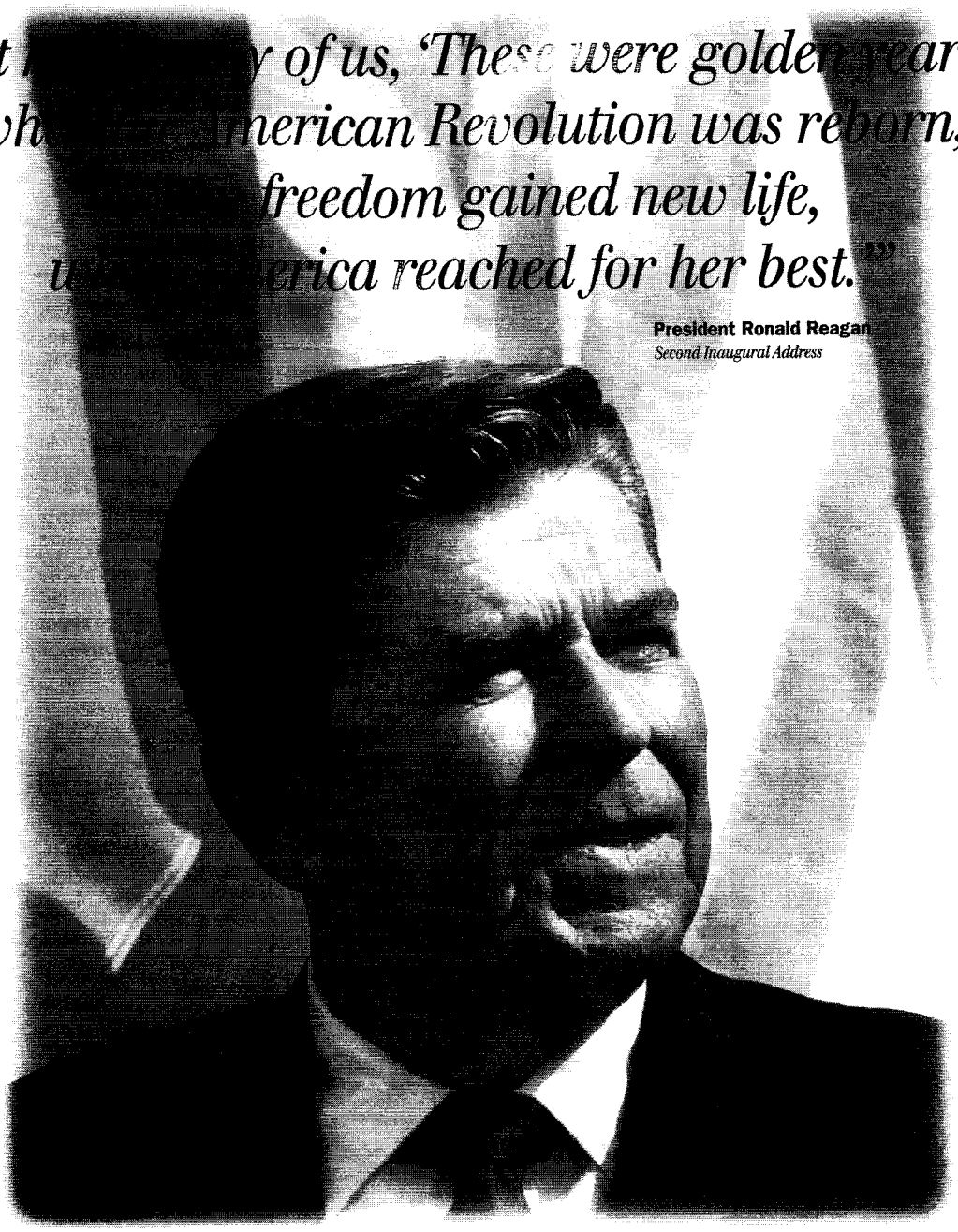
President Ronald Reagan
Second Inaugural Address



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An Echo, Not a Choice

By Douglas D. Dewey

School vouchers merely repeat the errors of public education.

Most people would agree that the Second Amendment to the Constitution guarantees citizens the right to keep and bear arms. Yet not even its most zealous defenders would construe this right to mean that the government should supply everyone with a carbine. Not so, it seems, with education. Most people agree that children have a right to an education, but we have come to accept that the government itself should do the educating, compel all children to attend, and require all citizens to pay for it.

This error in logic has had calamitous consequences. The takeover of education by the states in the mid-19th century and the resulting abdication of authority by the family set in motion a crippling concatenation of usurpation and surrender that continues to this day. Now education is an entitlement claimed by most, yet a right exercised by few.

There was a time when Americans knew the difference between rights and entitlements. A right used to be understood as a claim in justice, our concept of which flowed from tradition and natural law. As Alexander Hamilton put it, "The sacred rights of mankind are written, as with a sun beam in the whole volume of human nature, by the divinity itself; and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power." Our constitutional republican tradition informs us that God, not the state, is the source of rights. The state's role, then, is not to bestow rights, but to protect them by enacting laws consistent with a common tradition of justice and by enforcing those laws impartially.

In a totalitarian regime, by contrast, the source of rights is the all-powerful state, which permits citizens to exercise them only in its interest. The state may decide, for instance, that an armed populace threatens its power, and so suppress the right to keep arms. Similarly, it might decide that a populace able to feed itself independent of the state is not in its interest and suppress the right to own lands. But since starving people cannot labor for the state and are apt to grow restive, the state takes pains to feed them, while declaring solemnly their "right" to eat. Not surprisingly, the accumulation of power by the state gets a little easier with each new intrusion, each new surrender. As Thomas Jefferson

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ueless: Voucher proponents have failed to think through how they would restore rental authority in schools.

famously put it, "The natural progress of things is for government to gain ground and for liberty to yield."

Alas, the state may decide that a highly literate, self-reliant, and pious people is not in its interest, and gradually usurp the right of parents to educate their own children. How? By declaring it a "right"—an entitlement, actually—and making it free.

The state funding of education, then, is not an act of benign concern for the cultivation of citizenship, but a hostile assumption of ownership. Before the state began to fund schooling, education was free to the public as a whole; individual families and communities bore the cost while exercising the rights of their children to be educated.

In his book *Wealth and Poverty*, George Gilder recognized the social value of parents' retaining ownership of their children's education: "Nowhere is the vitality of families today more dramatically expressed than in the inspiring willingness of millions of American parents to save up to ensure a safe and rigorous education for their children. Moreover, this willingness is the highest sign of social responsibility. In their efforts to educate their offspring as best they can, whatever the cost, these families are making a major investment in the future of the country, and in the human capital on which coming generations will depend."

Right now, the parents of 6 million American children (about 12 percent of the total) do not ask government to educate them. These parents own their children's education, either by teaching them at home, or "contracting out" to a private school. This number grows every year, and if conservatives could rally around a single goal, it should be to push that number ever higher. Perhaps one day we will speak of the 12 percent who still depend on government for schooling and worry about what can be done to help those poor folks.

Many of us would say that education is the most serious, intimate, and sacred of all duties that parents owe their children. All parents must ensure that our children eat well, wear clean clothes, and sleep in a warm and secure home. Yet these duties are rather mundane compared to the awesome task of imparting knowledge and skills for self-reliance, instilling habits of virtue, and (many of us believe) preparing their souls for eternity. If we do not expect parents to pay for their own children's education, what credible argument can we then make that they should pay for their food, clothing, shelter, or medicine?

It is not hard to see that once the government had usurped the solemn right of families to educate their children, it was only a matter of time and effort before it could have all the rest. And really, once the government took charge of controlling the minds of our children, the rest is mere table scraps.

To tame a stallion you must first break its spirit; only then can it be made faithful and useful to its owner. Government schooling has broken the spirit of the American family. It perpetually affronts parents and denies that God's grace to parents is sufficient to nurture and rear the children He has placed in their loving custody. Government schooling reduces parents to the role of assistants who ensure the completion of homework, help with occasional projects, and get the kids to soccer practice on time. Government

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schooling is the very linchpin of the welfare state, the foundational tyranny that led to more than a century of servile laws to follow.

A Setback for Reform

So where does education reform stand today? In poor shape. In every other area of welfare reform, from health care to food stamps to housing to social security, the essential question is finally being asked: Is this the proper role of government? Not so with education. Until we acknowledge that government schooling is welfare, real education reform is impossible.

For several decades now, the cutting edge reform in education has been vouchers, which is a way of expanding the existing education entitlement by making it more portable and flexible. The main problem with vouchers as a vehicle for reform is that it misdiagnoses the problem as *overly rigid* government dependency. If the clients of school welfare feel they get no respect, putting them on a longer leash and adding variety to their diet may make them more content for a time, but it does nothing to address the deeper problem of government dependency.

It is well documented that every government that has subsidized private and religious schools, from Australia to France to Canada, has diminished their autonomy and blurred their distinction from state schooling. Vouchers offer private schools in America the same fate, even before the government slaps new regulations on participating schools. This is because the private schools that accept vouchers will no longer be owned by parents, but by the state. During a court challenge to a pilot voucher program in Cleveland, Ohio, a lawyer for the American Federation of Teachers recently provided a sneak peek of how parents and the schools they choose will be regarded under a voucher plan. In oral arguments, he characterized voucher-bearing parents as "inconsequential conduits" of state funds.

Until we acknowledge that government vouchers are welfare, real education reform is impossible.

To carry out your duty as a parent, you must own the means to produce the education for your children, by either contracting out or doing it yourself. "School choice" may make you a chooser but it won't make you an owner, any more than housing vouchers make you a homeowner. No government voucher frees you from dependence upon government. To rephrase Abe Lincoln, I'd prefer my welfare straight up, without the base alloy of self-delusion.

Let us not, after all, mistake the appearance of a free market with reality. Voucher proponents contend that the creation of market conditions in education, such as parents' freedom to choose among schools, will bring about an actual market. Here is where some voucher proponents begin to resemble utopian socialists, who similarly promise that once the state owns everything and everyone has equal choices, the state will just melt away.

We may fairly ask when we can expect the melting to begin. Milton Friedman hopes that vouchers will lead to the repeal of compulsory attendance laws and the elimination of all government funding for education. He has never explained how we go from our current 88 percent rate of dependency on government up to 100 percent, then down to zero. Proposals to require parents to match the government's contribution to their voucher forget that subsidy stimulates dependency. Vouchers in any form will create an insatiable constituency for bigger and bigger subsidies.

I like to say that if I were advising the National Education Association on how to preserve and expand the government schooling monopoly (and didn't have a conscience), I would urge the following plan: Continue the pretense of opposition to vouchers (which fuels much of its support among conservatives), while embracing them strategically by softening genuine resistance. Wherever they pass, complain bitterly, then move in to regulate. Playwright, polemicist, and Fabian socialist George Bernard Shaw would have approved. In 1903, he wrote that "since more than half the children in [England] were in voluntary [privately funded] schools and could not be got out of them," they "should be fully financed by the State, and brought under its control."

Whereas the Fabians aimed to emasculate religious schools, voucher proponents will do it inadvertently, then feel bad about it. Some, I fear, would even consider it an acceptable loss. Witness the recent push in Congress for a federally funded voucher plan for families in the District of Columbia. After Senator Jim Jeffords, a liberal Republican from Vermont, blocked passage of a voucher bill that had already passed the House, negotiators sat down to work out a compromise. Bowing to the teachers unions, the Senate eventually voted to kill the voucher plan.

Nevertheless, the Senate did the right thing, albeit for the wrong reasons. Among other warts, the plan included a provision that required participating religious schools to provide written assurance that "funds received" under the subti-

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tle "will not be used to pay the costs related to a religion class or a religious ceremony." Voucher proponents offered little apology for this egregious capitulation, and even less toleration of dissent from fellow conservatives. Critics of the D.C. voucher plan were scolded for being "purist" and failing to appreciate that politics "requires compromise."

Of course that's just the point: politics requires compromise. No matter how well a voucher is crafted, it will be modified and undermined before its passage. Even if a pristine voucher plan could pass with so-called regulatory firewalls for participating private schools, it will inevitably be amended later. But the more troubling lesson of the D.C. voucher debacle is that it may not be possible to concoct a voucher too heinous to win approval from its perennial boosters.

In *The Tragedy of American Compassion*, Marvin Olasky reminds us of the worthy charitable traditions in America that have withered as government assumed their functions. Olasky shows that there was indeed help for the widow, orphan, and outsider before government welfare, that it worked and even uplifted, and that we can have it again. Education likewise flourished in America before government monopoly schooling. This history will help us imagine what education might look like in the 21st century without government at the helm.

Compulsory government schooling did not begin on a large scale in this country until the 1850s and 1860s. Yet early America was among the most literate nations in recorded history, according to Pierre DuPont DeNemours (1812), Alexis de Tocqueville (1835), and Michael Chevalier (1838). In 1776, Tom Paine's pamphlet "Common Sense" sold more than 500,000 copies in a nation of 2 million, many of whom were slaves or indentured servants! In 1818, Noah Webster estimated that more than 5 million copies of his Spelling Book had been sold to a population of less than 20 million.

A Better Way

Proponents of vouchers say government help is needed to educate the poor. But there is a better way: privately funded vouchers, or precollege scholarships. Since the first program was started in 1991 by J. Patrick Rooney, the former chairman of Golden Rule Insurance Co., the precollege scholarship movement has ballooned to 27 programs serving more than 10,000 low-income children—all private dollars, all private schools. And the families of every one of these children, with an average income of $15,000 a year, pay a large portion of the cost of tuition. Precollege scholarships do two wonderful things at once: they bring hope to inner cities, and provide living, breathing examples of poor families breaking free from government subservience. Every child who leaves a government school for an independent school with help from an individual or business in his community represents another brick pulled out from the base of the Berlin Wall of government monopoly schooling.

Precollege scholarships completely fulfill in miniature the goal of fostering independence from government. Citizens help the needy in the community to attend the school of their choice. Such scholarships liberate families without coercion. They are flexible, replicable, efficient, and empowering. They enjoy broad bipartisan support, and, if marketed effectively, could develop the same tradition of giving enjoyed by the United Negro College Fund, the Red Cross, and the Salvation Army.

Voucher proponents say we need to reach millions of children. Ah, yes, reach. Stalin had reach. Mother Teresa settles for depth.

But wait, you say. Couldn't a government voucher be designed to work something like a precollege scholarship, including matching payments from families, few conditions, little or no oversight, and no regulatory encroachments? Well, as they say in *Wayne's World*: "It could happen!" But if it did, vouchers would represent the first nonintrusive, flexible, lean, voluntary, locally supported government program ever! More importantly, even if government could replicate the charitable and volunteer sector, why in heaven's name would we want it to?

Voucher proponents answer that precollege scholarships are nice, but we need to reach millions of children! Ah, yes, the reach argument. Hillary Clinton's health-care plan had reach. Stalin had reach. Mother Teresa settles for depth. And conservatives should likewise steadfastly reject the standard that measures the goodness of a thing by its capacity and reach. We must not be dime store planners, competing with liberals at the numbers game. Rather, let's insist that all virtue is personal, that the fruits of virtue aren't transferable or subject to collectivization, that the term "education system" is as much an oxymoron as "love policy."

No doubt restoring the enterprise of learning to families and communities will take more than private scholarships. Two important developments are already directing us into the next millennium. The first is the rise of entrepreneurs and investors who see a vast emerging market

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about to be liberated from the clutches of 50 state school monopolies. This will move beyond mere contracting for buses and books, and into the main course of the market: the provision of education services. Education Alternatives, Inc., which contracts with government schools, has fallen on hard times, but Nobel Education Dynamics, an operator of for-profit K-12 schools, saw its stock value increase 277 percent in 1995.

Beyond bricks and mortar, there will be an increase in computer-aided and on-line learning. Multimedia learning will come into its own as the "telecosm" becomes a reality in the next decade. Tutoring services like Sylvan Learning could blossom into for-profit schools. Gifted mavericks like Marva Collins and the hundreds of teachers who have joined the breakaway American Association of Educators in Private Practice are blazing a trail for thousands more to follow. In February 1996, the respected investment house Lehman Brothers held its first annual Education Industry Conference, tempting attendees with the promise of ground-floor opportunities in a $600-billion industry. Just one educational equivalent of FedEx, which challenged the postal monopoly, will change everything.

There is a better way to educate low-income children: privately funded vouchers, or precollege scholarships.

A second key development will be a mass exodus of middle-class social conservatives from government schools. Christians must stop playing king-of-the-hill with liberals for control of Caesar's schools. Instead of lobbying the government for the right of children to keep Bibles tucked in their desks, we might consider building schools where teachers keep them on theirs. A hundred years ago, the Protestants used government schooling to gang up on the Catholics; for the past 30 years, the secularists have wrested control from the Protestants, and are lording it over them. Let's retire the bludgeon. Imagine the impact if Pat Robertson and James Dobson announced a goal of starting enough new schools to serve 5 million new children by the year 2000! Home schooling is already exploding, but one can only imagine how many more families would take back control if they had a choice they could afford and be comfortable with.

Finally, there are some highly desirable and viable political actions worth pursuing, including the following abbreviated list:

Tax relief. Taxes are to government schooling as blood is to a vampire. Funding for education must move from a hemorrhage to a trickle to a drop. Three-quarters of Americans do not have children in school. An increasing percentage of these will be older people, including many pensioners who own homes and pay school taxes. These good folks are being taxed down to cat food for a system they don't use, doesn't work, shouldn't exist, and churns out nasty kids with foul mouths and bad attitudes. At the other end, there are the 20- and 30-somethings, just starting to have families, and with fewer illusions about government deliverance than their Roosevelt-era grandparents and Johnson-era parents. These young families can't afford to buy a house or amass any savings and they know that their children don't have a prayer of thriving in the 21st-century job market with a government-school education. As we move forward, more and more people will demand to keep more of their own money.

Scrap compulsory school-attendance laws. The great engine of talent and money now powering vouchers across the country should switch tracks and pull an easier load for a change. Nobody likes getting clobbered over and over again, and repealing compulsory-attendance laws is a less-threatening and highly appealing initiative. Why force children who don't want to be in school to disrupt those who do? Since attendance laws had a negligible effect in increasing attendance in most states where they were initially passed (90 percent of people already went), we have no reason to expect a significant decline in the rolls upon their repeal. But it will deal a heavy blow to the power and prestige of the school monopolies (always a good thing), and begin to build political momentum for things like the repeal of property taxes to pay for schools.

Put the Feds to bed. Lately there's been much talk from former federal education secretaries about abolishing the U.S. Department of Education. This is a fine thing, but it must be part of a larger mission to end the federal *role* in education. Let's not merely shovel its programs back to other federal departments whence they came. Let the U.S. government be as silent in the area of education as is the U.S. Constitution.

What I have sketched out will not be accomplished with sweeping measures but by the slow, gritty, and unseen work of millions. We must strive for a shining ideal, an arrangement for learning based not on force, but on love.

Douglas D. Dewey *is the president of the National Scholarship Center, a research and information clearinghouse on privately funded voucher programs in Washington, D.C. The views expressed here are his own.*

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A Chance To Pursue My Dreams

By the end of my freshman year at a public high school in Santa Barbara, California, I had had enough.

Enough of the lewd comments and harassment I encountered daily. Enough of watching students come to class stoned or drunk. And enough of the racial tension that culminated for me when I was physically threatened by a gang of Hispanic girls because I had white friends.

To make matters worse, no one at the school seemed to care about any of this. Administrators didn't protect students from harassment in the hallways. Teachers didn't reprimand the students who disrupted class. Few showed concern if a student flunked all of his courses. I went for weeks without attending class, but no teacher ever said a word and my parents never found out.

Cynthia Inda at Harvard.

I came very close to dropping out, which would not have surprised my teachers. I am the youngest of seven children, born to immigrant parents from rural Mexico. My father has a third-grade education, and my mother never attended school. They never learned to speak English. My older brothers did not attend college; my older sisters became pregnant at an early age and dropped out of high school.

If I had stayed in my public school, I would surely have lost all interest in education. But I was lucky to have parents who scrimped and saved to send me, beginning in my sophomore year, to a private school that emphasized competence and character. It was a turning point: I rediscovered my ardor for learning. I graduated with honors and I was admitted this fall as a transfer student to Harvard University.

What was it about Brighton Academy, a small private school in Grants Pass, Oregon, that helped turn me around? In a word: leadership. The faculty and administration were interested in producing not only good students, but good people. I was once again free to focus on academics because I was no longer wasting my energy living in fear of school.

At my private school, adults weren't afraid to exercise authority in a sensitive yet firm manner, and for this they earned the students' respect. Teachers wouldn't tolerate tardiness, inappropriate dress, or disruption. When a student was caught with drugs, not only was he punished and his parents informed, but the administration addressed the entire student body about it.

Our teachers emphasized discipline and character. They taught us not to capitulate to peer pressure, reminding us that it takes strength and individuality to stand for what one believes. School officials regularly rewarded good conduct, through public praise and student-of-the-month awards.

Our instructors were exceptional not only because they got to know us outside of school—in our neighborhoods and churches, and even at family picnics—but because they were obviously committed to us as students. Brighton cannot afford to pay its teachers competitive salaries, and many teachers take, without complaint, outside jobs during the school year.

Contrary to many assumptions about private education, the student body at Brighton came from working-class and middle-class families. Parents held monthly rummage sales. Students took after-school jobs to help pay their tuition.

Sadly, the most powerful lessons of my public school—listen to peers, not parents; disrespect authority; learn not to care about learning—directly undermined those I was taught at home. But my private school emphasized that parents are a child's primary moral teachers, and they did everything to support parents in this role. Parents were integrated into the school community via planning committees, monthly all-school meetings, student-teacher conferences, and invitations to all school functions.

I thank my teachers at this wonderful school who cared that I learned. Although they made less money than my public-school teachers, they awakened my love of learning, and they taught the principles—integrity, honesty, courage—that have enabled me to pursue my dreams.

—Cynthia Inda

***Cynthia Inda** is a junior studying philosophy at Harvard University.*

Photo by Steven Yang

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Three Cheers for 3 Strikes

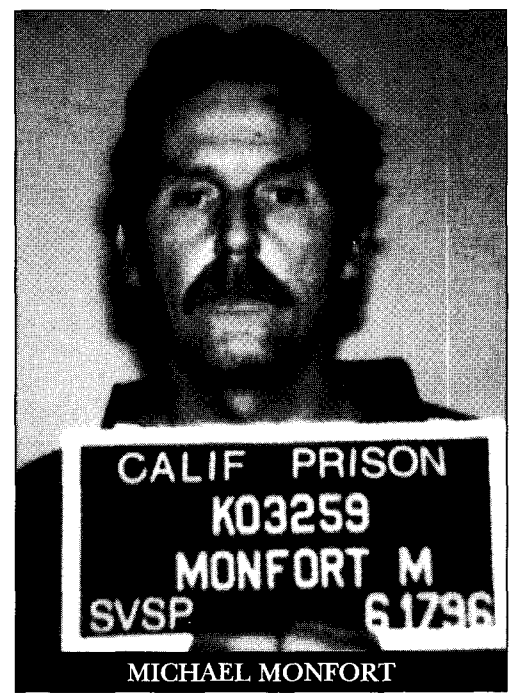
By Dan Lungren

Crime in California is dropping—fast. So far, this decade looks to be the most promising for reducing crime since the state started keeping complete statistics in 1952. Although California suffered—along with the rest of the nation—while the crime rate nearly quadrupled between 1960 and 1980, California is now recording some of the largest crime reductions of any state.

Preliminary crime statistics for 1995 show that the overall crime rate in California fell 8.5 percent; violent crimes dropped 5.5 percent and property crimes fell 10.1 percent. If the trend holds, California will record a third straight year of falling crime in 1996, including a marked acceleration in the last two years. The hard evidence points to historic decreases in all categories of crime in the state. California is about to set state records for:

- The largest one-year drop in state history in the rate *and* number of crimes;
- The largest two-year decline in the number of crimes;
- The first two-year drop in all major categories of crime (homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, and motor vehicle theft);
- The largest one-year drop in the number of violent crimes;
- The largest one-year drop in the rate and number of property crimes;
- The largest one-year drop in the number of burglaries;
- The largest one-year drop in the number of motor-vehicle thefts.

What accounts for these astonishing numbers? I would suggest it is in large part due to California's passage of a "three strikes and you're out" law, which has done more to stop revolving-door justice than any other measure in state or federal law. Enacted in 1994 by both popular initiative and legislative action, the law requires a defendant convicted of a felony to serve an indeter-



MICHAEL MONFORT

✗ Burglary
✗✗ Murder
✗✗✗ A series of robberies
SENTENCE: 800 YEARS TO LIFE

Photos courtesy of California Department of Corrections and individual prisons

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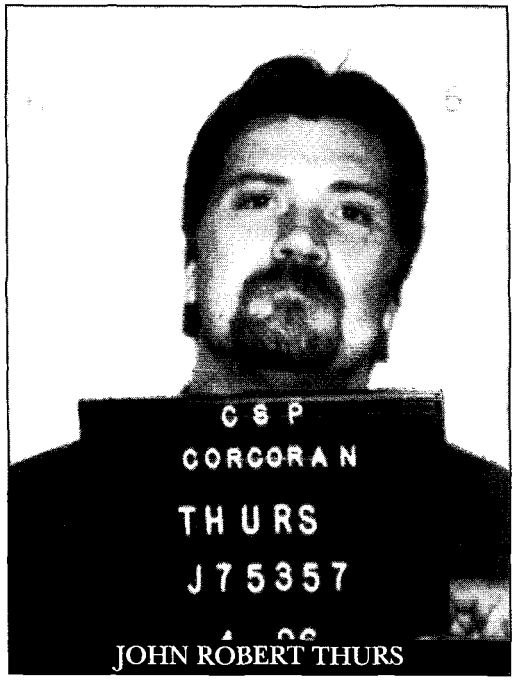
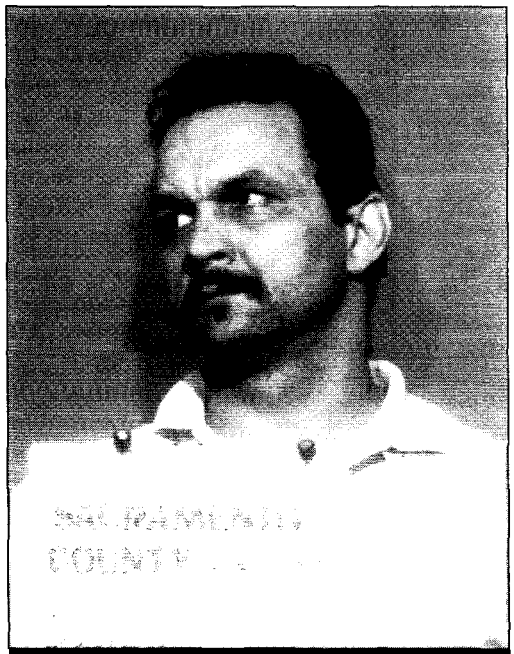


JOHN ROBERT THURS

✗ Home invasion robberies
✗✗ Assault with a deadly weapon
✗✗✗ Involuntary manslaughter, illegal gun possession

SENTENCE: 65 YEARS TO LIFE


BOBBY JOE FLOYD

✗ Bank robbery
✗✗ Convenience store robbery
✗✗✗ Robbery, carjacking, attempted kidnapping, kidnapping, assault with a deadly weapon, illegal gun possession

SENTENCE: 186 YEARS TO LIFE

minate life sentence when it is proved that he has committed two or more previous felonies defined as "violent" or "serious." Offenders given a life sentence become eligible for parole only after serving 25 years or three times the term that the current conviction would ordinarily warrant, whichever is greater. A "two strikes" provision, part of the same law, requires that when a defendant is convicted of a felony, and has been previously convicted of one "serious or violent" felony, the term of imprisonment is twice the usual sentence provided for the second felony conviction.

In June 1996, the California Supreme Court held in *People v. Romero* that, notwithstanding the ostensible mandatory language of the "three strikes" law, judges retain the discretion to strike or dismiss prior felony convictions; the court's judgement relied on statutory interpretation and the separation of powers. Thus, the state of the law is that while judges have discretion to strike a prior conviction, our district attorneys will still prove prior felony convictions and state courts will still sentence offenders under "three strikes." I have sponsored legislation to narrowly define and restrict the discretion that judges will have in these cases.

Accountability for Criminal Choices

As written and applied, "three strikes" is a model of strict and even-handed justice. It demands accountability, reflects common sense, presents a clear and certain penalty, and uncompromisingly invests in public safety. I like to reflect on former Chief Justice Warren Burger's comments made before an American Bar Association meeting in 1981: "A far greater factor is the deterrent effect of swift and certain consequences: swift arrest, prompt trial, certain penalty and—at some point—finality of judgment." Can anybody believe otherwise? The quotation reflects the chief justice's fundamental understanding that the rule of law affords the complementary blessings of both freedom and responsibility and provides the governing framework in which individual citizens make their individual decisions. The rule of law protects our free will from arbitrary constraints; at the same time, it provides consistency and impartiality to the life of the state and its citizens. What seems obvious in this formula is that as individuals exercise their individual, personal liberties in living their lives and in interacting with others, they also become personally accountable for the choices they make—choices from which clear consequences arise.

Yet, many opponents of "three strikes" disagree with the notion of strict personal accountability. Of course, while most of the self-proclaimed experts in criminal justice state their objections on other grounds—they call "three strikes" draconian, ineffective, too broad, too tough, and too expensive—the real theme that resounds in their criticism is that "three strikes" "re-victimizes" persons who already have been "victimized" by the forces of an unfriendly society and an adversarial government. In short, their view is that the targets of "three strikes" are not accountable for their conduct

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because "complex" forces extrinsic to the individual are the principal causes of criminal activity: poor education, unemployment, a detrimental social situation, or even the law enforcement system. Further, these critics have employed this philosophy to demand that sentencing for convicted criminals be made in light of "mitigating circumstances" and that incarceration should be for "rehabilitative purposes" to redress what society "did" to the inmate.

The voters of California have rejected this nonsense. And the record shows "three strikes" is doing precisely what the voters demanded when they overwhelmingly passed the initiative, by 72 percent to 28. The career criminal with multiple serious or violent felony convictions is being forced to make what should be an easy decision: Either stop committing felonies and live the remainder of your life in freedom, or spend 25 years to life in prison the next time you are caught and convicted of a felony. The career criminal will be held *personally accountable* for his decisions. Imagine that! When the voters rejected revolving-door justice, they rejected the arguments of apologists that we can divorce negative personal conduct from individual accountability.

Proportional Punishment

The second criticism against "three strikes" by criminal apologists is that the law does not furnish proportionate punishment. These critics focus on the cases in which a habitual felon is charged with a "minor" property or drug offense that qualifies as a third strike. They allege it is wholly improper to impose an indeterminate life sentence for a "minor" crime and that instead the offender should be given special consideration or more lenient treatment. The philosophical approach advocated here is that criminal conduct should be viewed in isolation of past history and surrounding circumstances. If a habitual felon currently commits a crime that is classified as a felony under California law, and he has convictions for two previous "serious" felonies, is it any surprise that Californians want a tougher punishment for the current felony?

Let's examine what constitutes a "serious or violent felony" for a "three strikes" prior conviction: murder or voluntary manslaughter; mayhem; rape; sodomy by force, violence, duress, menace, threat of great bodily injury, or fear of immediate and unlawful bodily injury on the victim or another person; oral copulation by force, violence, duress, et cetera; lewd or lascivious acts on children; felonies with personal use of firearm; attempted murder; assault with intent to commit rape or robbery; assault with deadly weapon; arson; kidnapping; selling drugs to minors; and many others. If these are not "serious" enough, I would like to know which ones should be dropped as insufficiently serious. When the third strike is but a "minor" felony, such as grand theft or possession of certain drugs for sale, why should society ignore the *habitual* criminal activity of this offender when sentencing him?

Common sense dictates the answer to this question. First, society does not view crime in a vacuum. As Princeton professor John DiIulio recently wrote, "Most Americans rightly think in terms of total criminality—the full social and moral weight of an offender's acts against life, liberty, and property. They reject the criminological equivalent of grade inflation—judging plea-bargained-gorged prisoners by their last conviction rather than their overall criminal grade-point average, adult and juvenile." Second, an offender who has committed a series of violent or serious crimes is likely to commit additional crimes of the same nature; wisdom demands that an offender's criminal record be the starting point for determining punishment. Finally, the rule of law demands a response to a lifestyle of destruction and violence. There is nothing disproportionate about giving a harsh sentence to a felon who has not learned from having committed two serious felonies before.

Crime in California fell by 9 percent last year now that criminals are kept in jail.

Deterrence Effect

There has been a marked split of opinion, at least in academia, as to how best to prevent crime. On the one hand, some argue that habitual criminal activity can be "cured" by placing offenders in correctional programs that renounce retributive goals and instead stress the redemptive value of education, vocational instruction, and even group therapy. Another school of thought centers on the positive behavioral effects of a system of clear and certain consequences for destructive and criminal behavior. Unfortunately, many in the "redemptive programs" group reject outright the legitimacy of deterrence. The causes of criminal behavior are far too complex, they say, to permit any generalizations about whether individuals will consider legal prohibitions or sanctions when they act and interact in society—especially when they are hungry, ill-housed, under-educated, or emotionally neglected.

The value of deterrence, however, is grossly underestimated by these "experts," who have devised no way to prove or disprove its effects. I

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vised no way to prove or disprove its effects. I believe certainty of incarceration, for a long and inevitable period, nonetheless has a dramatic effect on the behavior of individuals. Consider the statement of a veteran homicide detective in the Sacramento police department as to the law's impact: "You hear [the criminals] talking about it all the time. These guys are really squirming. They know what's going on. . . . I've flipped 100 percent," Gregory Gaines told a *Sacramento Bee* reporter. Gaines had just been released from Folsom State Prison with two serious or violent felony convictions—two "strikes"—and told the reporter that many other inmates have decided to heed the warnings of the "three strikes" law. "It's a brand-new me, mainly because of the law. It's going to keep me working, keep my attitude adjusted."

Perhaps the most interesting statistics track the migratory patterns of felons on parole in California. In the last year before "three strikes" became law in 1994, 226 more paroled felons chose to move to California than moved out. After "three strikes" took effect, the flow reversed: 1,335 more paroled felons chose to *leave* California in 1995 than to enter. We've gone from being a net importer of paroled felons to a net exporter! Coincidence? Hardly.

Another school of thought seeks to explain the reduction in crime in California solely as a function of social or demographic trends. They argue that a troubled economy breeds more crime. (This ignores that in 1992, 1993, and 1994, overall crime in California dropped even as the state's economy endured one of the worst economic recessions in its history.) They argue that the crime rate falls naturally when the proportion of males in the crime-prone age groups declines. (While this may be part of the explanation, no study we have found supports the notion that "demographic changes" alone drive the crime rate up or down.) Without admitting it, this side in the debate, like some of those in the "redemptive programs" community, believes that tough incarcerative penalties for criminals and tough law-enforcement strategies do not work. In short, they deny the obvious value of deterring crime as a means of preventing it.

Consider the historical experience of no deterrence. California has about 138,000 inmates in its prisons today. When we began our push for a tougher response to crime in the early 1980s—establishing punishment and social incapacitation as the priorities of our penal system—the total inmate population was only 25,000, even though the crime rate reached an all-time high in 1980-81. Our prisons had revolving doors through which career criminals cycled, *undeterred by the prospect of a short prison stint.* Many California inmates viewed a stay in prison as a chance to receive neglected medical and dental care, and to beef up their muscles in the weight yard in preparation for the next "recess" on the outside. "Three strikes" and other tougher laws have begun to change that.

Under the leadership of governors Deukmejian and Wilson and the state's vocal (and often overlooked) victims of crime, California embarked on an active prison building program in conjunction with tougher crime laws and more conservative judges. So where are we now? Today we have 138,000 felons incarcerated in state prisons. Unless you believe that releasing those additional 113,000 felons from our prisons tomorrow would have no effect on the number of crimes committed and that our laws, policies, and promise of punishments have no effect on the number of criminals on our streets and the amount of crime suffered by our state, it is clear that we are beginning to win the fight.

But what if we had not changed our incarceration policies so dramatically? What level of crime might California be suffering from today if the runaway trend of upward crime rates of the 1960s and 1970s had continued unabated? In 1994, California's overall crime rate was 3,147 crimes per 100,000 people. The rate would have reached 4,403 per 100,000 had the trend of the 1970s continued. In just the last two years—the "three strikes" years—we can estimate the level of crime victimization that would have occurred had our pre-"three strikes" crime rate remained unchanged. In the last two years, California would have had 907 additional murders, 2,015 additional rapes, 37,256 additional robberies, 11,602 additional aggravated assaults, 92,727 additional burglaries, and 56,991 additional motor vehicle thefts. A recent RAND Corp. study estimated that rigorous enforcement of "three strikes" will reduce serious felonies committed by adults in California between 22 and 34 percent below what would have occurred had the previous law remained in effect. The authors emphasized that about a third of the felonies eliminated will be violent crimes such as murder, rape, and assaults causing great bodily injury. The other two-thirds will be less violent, but still serious, felonies, including less-injurious assaults, most robberies, and burglaries.

"Three strikes" demands accountability, reflects common sense, presents a clear penalty, and uncompromisingly invests in public safety.

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Cost to Society

The critics of "three strikes" also miss another obvious truth: A criminal in prison cannot commit crimes against the general public. In fact, the cost of crimes committed against our citizens is higher than the cost of incarcerating them. The critics are warning that "three strikes"—and all our tougher laws—will cost too much to implement. Yet, according to a 1992 U.S. Department of Justice report on justice expenditures and employment, only three cents of every tax dollar goes to public safety such as police, courts, prisons, jails, and related activities. Perhaps we should question why our priorities have been so backwards. I submit that, strictly analyzed in a cost-benefit perspective, the tough approach to crime is financially sound.

A 1996 recent study by the National Institute for Justice assessed the costs to society of murders, rapes, robberies, aggravated assaults, and burglaries. The costs included both tangible and intangible costs to the victims, their families, and society, from lost income and medical expenses to pain and suffering and risk of death. The federal study's calculations did not include direct costs to the criminal-justice system, such as police, jail, prosecution, courts, prisons, and the like. The costs to society and victims for each crime range from $2,940,000 for each murder to $1,400 for each burglary. Using these base figures, had California not experienced the post-"three strikes" drop in crime in 1994 and 1995, it would have cost us:

- $2.66 billion for the additional murders;
- $174.3 million for the additional rapes;
- $707.9 million for the additional robberies;
- $108.5 million for the additional aggravated assaults;
- $129.9 million for the additional burglaries.

Clearly, the costs to society of a return to the lenient approach, even in purely fiscal terms (which is obviously not the primary consideration when paired with the human costs of crime) are astronomical. Other approaches to preventing crime have value that I, for one, do not dispute. The move toward community-oriented policing must continue and thrive. California leads the nation in community-oriented policing, a philosophy that enables police officers to work more intensively with citizens in their neighborhoods, rather than scurrying from one 911 call to the next. It, too, costs money, but the investment is worth the up-front costs.

In fact, some critics of "three strikes" argue that the example of New York City, which has enjoyed a steep drop in crime without the benefit of state laws similar to California's, undercuts the case for "three strikes" policies. New York City, however, invested in a comprehensive community-oriented policing program along with a "zero tolerance" policy that requires officers to strictly enforce every possible violation. Like "three strikes," New York City's program costs money—and it works. (New York City has added 7,000 officers since 1990. The entire Los Angeles Police Department totals 8,737; New York City 37,800.) Ironically, it is *deterrence* again at work in New York City—the criminals in the city know the police are there and change their behavior accordingly.

Unfortunately, we are told that a proportionally large group of young males, currently in their pre-teen years, will soon move into their "crime-prone" years. We should refuse to accept the notion that a high rate of crime will be committed by these youths. A juvenile crime wave is not inevitable, just as our high crime rates of the past were not inevitable. As a society we have to confront the conditions that exacerbate levels of juvenile crime and violence. Our challenge is to implement juvenile crime laws and policies which will deter as many as possible from a life of crime while still incarcerating those teenagers who commit serious violence on our citizens. There is an important place for prevention and intervention programs for our young.

Once a net importer of paroled felons, California is now a net exporter. Last year, 1,335 more parolees left than arrived.

Although "three strikes" will incarcerate more habitual criminals, the costs are justified. The price of allowing these offenders to return to a lifestyle of victimizing citizens is too high. "Three strikes" incapacitates active criminals, who can no longer commit crimes against the public. "Three strikes" removes from our streets the harmful role models these offenders present to our youth and to gang "wannabes." "Three strikes" re-introduces into our collective consciousness a moral imperative that criminal activity should not be tolerated in any way. Most importantly, "three strikes" reduces crime by providing a solid and unquestionable deterrent to criminal behavior. California's sharp decline in crime in the last two years may be attributable to numerous, complex factors, but it is indisputable that "three strikes" has played a major role in reshaping public safety in California, both for law-abiding citizens and for would-be criminals.

***Dan Lungren**, a Republican, is the attorney general of California.*

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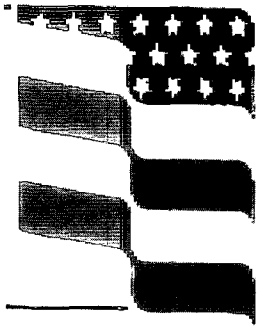

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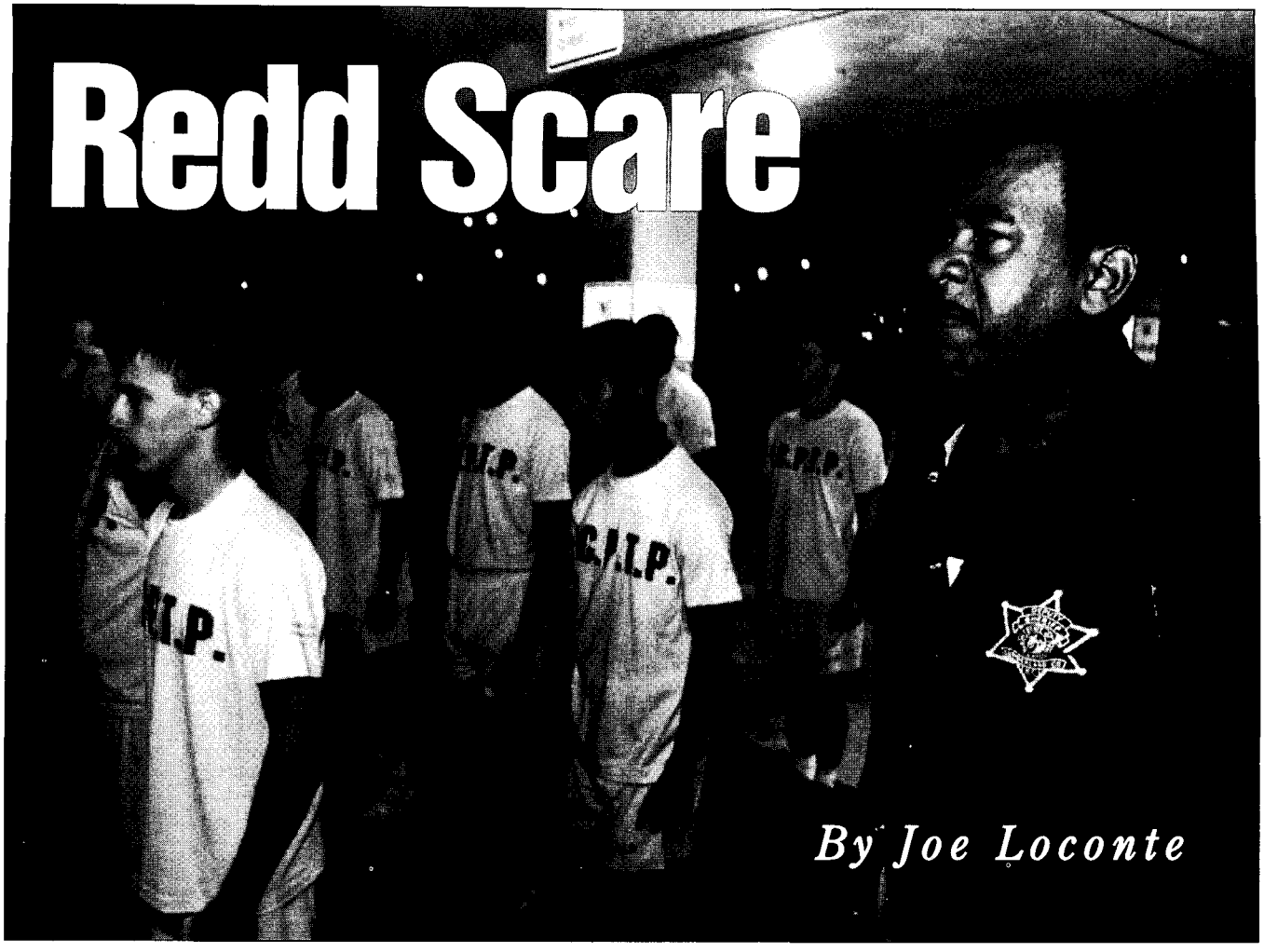
Redd Scare



By Joe Loconte

Over the last five years, 775 young criminals—some convicted of drug-dealing, robbery, and assault—have taken Sergeant Roger Redd's crash course in law and order. All but a handful have stayed out of trouble. Here's how a former drill sergeant uses physical and moral discipline to shake men loose from a life of crime.

Photo by Jay Capers

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It's early morning in Fayetteville, North Carolina, home to the army's 82nd Airborne Division. Thirty pairs of feet shuffle clumsily to the cadence of a husky-voiced sergeant. Perhaps it's a little too early for some of these recruits, who are having trouble following orders. "Don't show me a grin, I'm not a dentist," snaps Sergeant Roger Redd. "Don't anticipate the command. Pay attention. Engage the brain, engage the brain."

Although the rows of young men with closely cropped hair may resemble greenhorn troops from nearby Fort Bragg, the scene is deceptive. The men are not recruits—they're criminals. And this isn't boot camp, it's the parking lot of the Cumberland County courthouse.

"You say you got in trouble, you can't do anything with your life," Redd says. "Wrong answer. You decided to break the law. You made a mistake, but now you're going to profit from it. You're going to do right."

Welcome to Sergeant Redd's physical-training program, a court-approved plan to turn troublemakers on probation into law-abiding citizens. Redd, a court bailiff and former army drill sergeant, oversees a military-style regimen three mornings a week that mixes physical discipline, mental toughness, and common-sense counseling. Less than a chain gang but more than a Jane Fonda workout, Redd's 90-day program is being hailed locally as one of the most successful efforts anywhere to take youthful offenders otherwise bound for prison and turn their lives around.

In a few hours, Redd will be busy at his paying job: handcuffing suspects, breaking up fights, and escorting criminals to court or to jail. But now, at just after 5 A.M., he's volunteering to steer these youngsters away from a lawless future by giving them some private lessons on crime and punishment. One at a time, they stand up and explain how they got into trouble with the law.

"I was charged with auto theft," one mumbles.

"You were stealing cars," says Redd, pacing slowly.

"I wasn't stealin' cars. I was stealin' car parts."

"What were you gonna' do," Redd fires back, "put a car together?"

"No."

"Get down and push. It's 'no, *sir!*' "

The boy drops to the ground and starts doing push-ups while others stand and recite their stories. No one else forgets to say "sir."

But Redd isn't through with them yet. "If you're used to using your conscience every day, then you're not going to go out and do something stupid," he says. "By the time you leave here, you should be remorseful for what you've done." His aim: teach personal responsibility and break the men of their "I'm a victim" mentality. Until that happens, Redd says, he won't be able to shake them loose from criminal behaviors and keep them out of prison.

Make no mistake: Prison is exactly where most of the men, ages 16 to 21, are headed. "Most come to this program because they failed every other method to keep them out of the Department of Corrections," says court administrator Kim Tucker. "This is the last stop."

All are on probation for committing a nonviolent offense, such as breaking and entering, larceny, or drug possession. Many are repeat offenders, whose crimes as juveniles—which are expunged from public record—include arson, robbery, and even assault with a deadly weapon. Virtually all of them have violated the conditions of their probation, and are one step away from prison. "Most of them have never been taught discipline or respect," says Redd. "They're used to doing what they want to, on their own, when they get good and ready. And suddenly now someone's in charge telling them what to do and how not to do it. It's a shock to them."

This may be just the kind of shock therapy needed to jolt young lawbreakers to their senses. About 775 of the 875 men and women who've entered the program have gone on to complete it. According to the county court, only 15 of the graduates have been charged with subsequent criminal offenses. Redd, who keeps a file of each of his graduates, says that 65 have joined the army, and many have completed high school and gotten jobs. "I'm in a position to see a lot of young men come through here," says assistant district attorney Charles Scott, who regularly refers men to the program. "We've seen a very small number come back."

A tough-love regimen proves to be one of the most effective antidotes to youth crime in the nation.

Criminal-justice officials say they know of no other alternatives to prison—not boot camps, not home surveillance, not work programs—that approach the program's success rates. "It's the best alternative sentencing program that I'm

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aware of in the state of North Carolina, and maybe nationally, in terms of results achieved," says E. Lynn Johnson, a superior-court judge who helped Redd launch the effort more than five years ago.

Redd got the idea after helplessly watching teens and young adults stream in and out of court—men who, in Redd's view, needed a muscular dose of physical and moral discipline. But they weren't likely to get that from the state's probation system or from imprisonment. "Think about it. In prison you get free education, exercise, television," says Art Zeidman, a candidate for superior-court judge who has run alternatives-to-prison programs in Raleigh. "For the first-time offender, the system is one of a comfortable cocoon, and they don't feel a need to stay away from it."

Patricia Timmons Goodson, a district-court judge in Cumberland County, says she was "not satisfied at all" with her sentencing options. Supervised probation, a commonly used alternative to prison, often fails because a mere handful of county probation officers are asked to track nearly 1,900 youthful offenders now in the system. "You would continue to see many—too many—of the same young people coming back," she says.

Redd was convinced his army experience offered a solution. Participants in his program enter a structured training environment a few hours a day, three days a week, for three months. They must arrive on time, wear uniforms, and learn basic drills. They also receive regular warnings to stay in school, along with practical instruction about finding and keeping jobs.

Add to this Redd's blend of personal and professional grit: He grew up poor in a family of eight children; signed up for three tours in Vietnam as an infantry combat soldier; piloted an attack helicopter that was gunned down over Hamburger Hill; received five Purple Hearts for being wounded five times; spent six months in a hospital bed with a foot wound while doctors fretted that he would never walk again; and retired, a first sergeant with the 82nd Airborne, after 22 years in the military.

Redd's approach offers both a carrot and a stick. Graduates avoid jail and might also see the court relax their probation requirements. Nongraduates head straight to jail. Redd decides who is fit to graduate—with no second chances and no appeals.

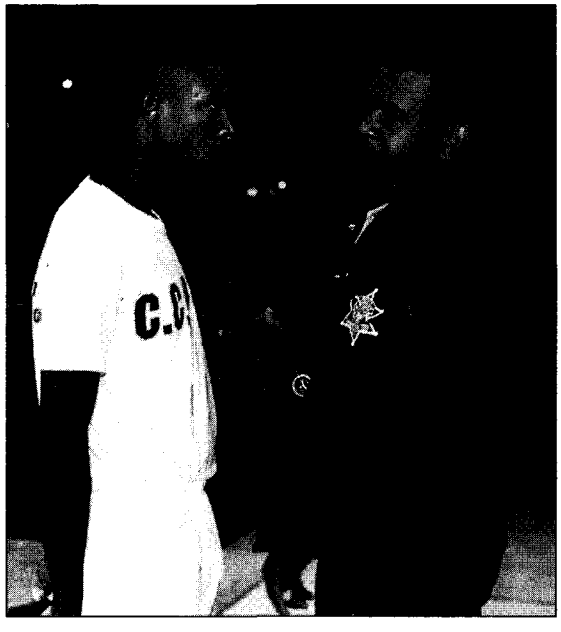
An early believer, Judge Johnson first began referring men to the program in February 1991. Today, virtually every judge, district attorney, and probation officer in the county's court system scouts out offenders who might be good candidates. Court officers such as Goodson regularly don sneakers and sweats and join Redd in the morning to speak to his latest crop of students.

The key to Redd's strategy is using the best of his military training to reinforce good habits and, eventually, good attitudes. That includes regular drills, countless push-ups, five-mile runs, and swift consequences for disobeying commands. For these men, many of whom have dropped out of high school and haven't held a job, getting up and getting to the courthouse on time is a milestone in personal discipline.

Everyone gets a chance to act as a squad leader, yelling out drill commands. The reason: Many kids who get into trouble do so because they are followers, easily drawn into crime when they're idle. "The man is totally in control of his actions. He doesn't drink, he doesn't smoke, but he still has a great time," says Wesley, one of Redd's graduates who returns a few mornings a month to help train others in the program. "He's teaching them to act independently, not to go along with the crowd."

The approach differs from many boot-camp experiments, however, because it offers much more than a physical regimen. Says Johnson: "It goes beyond just physically getting in their faces and teaching them how many push-ups they can do, but teaching them to be a man or a woman along the way."

How does the sergeant teach young men about manhood? In Redd's equation, it's the little decisions that matter, the choices that eventually add up to excellence and integrity. So when he sees his troops marching out of formation, he pounces. "That's raggedy," he barks. "I said a straight row. That's like being on your job and they want you to make sure the pots and pans are put away and they're clean. You do it and you do



Photos by Jay Capers

Think you're just a victim of society? Says Sergeant Redd: "Wrong answer."

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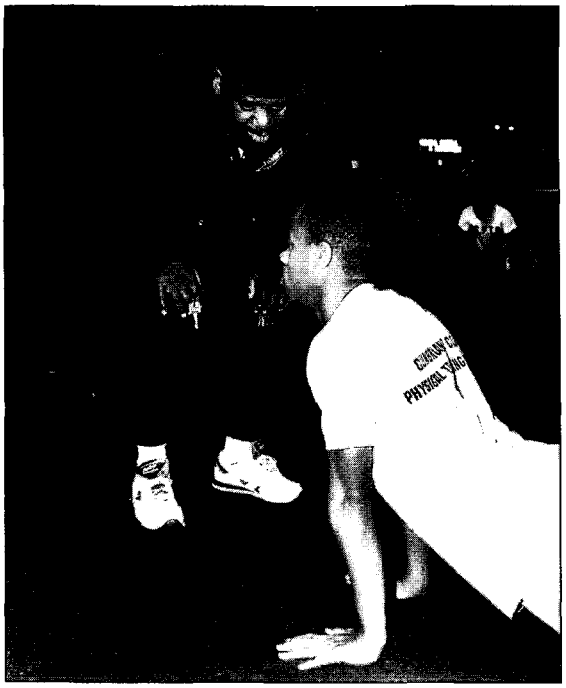

Get down and push: In Sergeant Redd's universe, every decision has consequences.

it *right.* Men have *discipline.*"

Redd also counsels the men, individually and in groups. They never seem to know when he'll launch into a mini-sermon about responsibility, honesty, or conscience. Sometimes Redd will focus on building their self-respect: "Every one of you sitting here, from left to right, is just as good as I am. But now you've got a temporary setback," he says. "What you have to do is keep yourself straight and work hard."

During his speech, Redd spots a late arrival who tries to slip into formation. He doesn't miss a beat: "Get down and *push!* If you're late tomorrow, just keep on running, right to jail. Because you're going to jail, because you can't follow instructions. You have an obligation and responsibility to yourself to get here on time."

At other times, he presses home the obligation to show respect for others. One of his favorite phrases: "People have the right to be left alone." Redd asks the men to picture themselves as adult parents (some of them are), and to imagine one of their children dying of a cocaine overdose, or a stab wound, or from gun fire. "I want them to realize they would not want this to happen to their child," he says later. "So I place them in a predicament. It makes them wake up and think. Now we're engaging the brain."

After less than a week in the program, Mike's brain already is engaged. He was convicted of burglary and assault with a weapon. Now, during a short break between drills, he says he's determined to graduate so he can clear his record. He's studying computer programming at Fayetteville Technical Training College. "I'm trying to think about the future," he says. Wesley, the recent grad who volunteers as a squad leader, was arrested on drug charges but now works as a graphic artist. "It gave me a real hope that I could still make something of myself," he says, "regardless of the past."

Redd usually works with about 50 men at a time (plus an occasional woman or two), and nearly 90 percent of them graduate. They might be rewarded with termination of their probation, fewer hours of community service, or reduced fines. Court officials hold a graduation ceremony for each class, and distribute diplomas and special awards donated by community groups, including a tuition scholarship to a local community college. The graduates, all wearing white shirts and black ties, often will pause to thank Redd for being tough on them and convincing them they could make it.

"You can see the care in him," says Kathy Bond, the county's chief probation officer. "You see that hard-nosed soldier, but then you see that other side of him, too—that compassionate person that really wants to help somebody." That's a combination most of these men have rarely glimpsed before. Many grew up with no father in the home. Some live with cousins or grandmothers or on the streets.

They're usually surprised when Redd offers to take them to church, or out to breakfast, or to help arrange a job interview, or negotiate their sentence with the district attorney. Near the end of one session, Redd has the men stand and explain what they've gotten out of the program so far. Says one boy, "For once the system is not working against me, but working for me."

Straight talk about responsibility and respect, physical discipline that reinforces basic life skills, and a caring but hard-as-nails authority figure—could that be a formula for breaking the cycle of juvenile crime?

"I think it can be duplicated," says Judge Goodson, "but it's going to take a person that is just as tough . . . and just as committed as Roger Redd." Cumberland County doesn't spend a dime on the program: Redd takes no money for directing the effort, works during his off-hours, uses no county facilities, and asks the local Chamber of Commerce to donate uniforms as needed. By keeping hundreds of offenders out of jail, he calculates, he saves the county $41 a day, or about $6.5 million over the last five years.

Says Judge Johnson: "Roger's experiment here could be contagious." The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that at least 520,000 of the nation's juveniles are placed on probation each year. With numbers like that, we should hope for an epidemic.

***Joe Loconte** is the deputy editor of* Policy Review: The Journal of American Citizenship.

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Welfare Reform

Can the States Fly Solo?

Illustration by Anatol Woolf

Policy Review asked four state welfare officials—Eloise Anderson of California, Vance McMahan of Texas, Don Taylor of Mississippi, and Jason Turner of Wisconsin—to comment on the following questions about what the welfare-reform legislation of 1996 will mean for their states:

Q: ***States have been ahead of the federal government in welfare reform for many years, and 43 states have already received some sort of waiver from federal welfare rules. What will be the most important changes for your state as a result of the federal legislation? How do these compare in magnitude with reforms your state has already embarked on?***

Eloise Anderson, director, California Department of Social Services: Under the new federal welfare legislation, recipients will no longer be able to receive aid indefinitely (until the youngest child at home turns 18) without working. Time limits will force more people into jobs. This will lead to more families entering the mainstream and over time becoming self-sufficient. Government will cease to be the first place families turn to when in trouble. And childbearing and parenting will again be a primary responsibility of parents.

Families will become more accountable to each other. States will be given the opportunity to treat married and single-parent families more equally so that there is no penalty for marriage. Stricter paternity establishment will lead to greater child support. There will be no aid for teen parents who drop out of school and they will be required to live at home or in an adult-supervised setting as a condition of aid.

The legislation also will remove costly and restrictive federal mandates and give states a *little* more flexibility to design programs that work best for their communities.

Vance McMahan, policy director, Office of the Governor, State of Texas: The biggest impact of the federal welfare legislation may, at first, be more symbolic than substantive. The decision to

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end the federal entitlement to Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) marks a reversal of 61 years of social policy, an admission that the current welfare system has become more a cause of poverty than a cure, and a recognition that perhaps someone outside Washington, D.C., may be able to do a better job at helping those in need. By so doing, the federal law gives states and communities more freedom to tailor their policies to reflect the values and specific needs of their people.

Ending the welfare entitlement has also changed the fundamental question. Instead of asking, "What is this person entitled to?," states can now ask, "What does this person need to become self-sufficient?" By changing the question, the bill gives states the freedom to try different answers.

As a practical matter, the bill's initial impact will be limited, since it allows states to continue to operate under existing waivers. Texas will be affected by the decision to cut off food stamps and SSI to some legal immigrants. State officials are trying to determine the impact of this provision.

AFDC died on September 30, 1996. California, Mississippi, Texas, and Wisconsin say they're ready to take over.

The new work-participation requirements will also affect Texas. Texas does not have a generous welfare grant ($188 a month for a family of three) and thus tends to have a welfare population that is relatively poorer and less educated than other states. Governor George Bush is, however, committed to marshaling all necessary resources to liberate as many people as possible from dependence on government. Welfare rolls in Texas have shrunk by 15 percent during his term.

Don Taylor, executive director, Mississippi Department of Human Services: The current legislation provides a long overdue shifting of the balance of power between federal and state levels of government. Congress finally acknowledged that the "one size fits all" federal programs are an abysmal failure, so states will now be allowed to tailor welfare plans to meet specific needs of their states. We may now correctly measure the success of our programs by the number of individuals placed in the work force, not the number enrolled in training programs that often have no connection to the actual job market.

Jason Turner, director of capacity building, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development: The new law could not have been passed at a more propitious time for Wisconsin—just as we were negotiating with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services over the terms of the waiver, the new law made it possible to implement Governor Tommy Thompson's radical welfare replacement program, "Wisconsin Works," or "W2," without major compromises. This plan eliminates AFDC entirely and replaces it with a system of work opportunities for individuals of all abilities. It differs from other reform initiatives (such as two-years-and-off plans) in that no unrestricted cash assistance is provided, not even temporarily. Instead, individuals who need family income will have four work options available, starting at the top (private employment) and working down to community-service jobs or sheltered workshops, if necessary. Temporary "bridge" loans, subsidized child care, and subsidized medical insurance will be made available—whatever is absolutely necessary to make work possible. But in the end, all parents will enjoy the dignity of earning their family income through work.

There were many obstacles for the governor to overcome in order to realize this concept. The ideological left in Wisconsin and in Washington had fully mobilized to oppose W2. But a new Republican legislative majority in Madison and the new federal legislation passed in Washington combined to make their protests moot.

Q: ***Many liberals predict that children and families will be hurt by the welfare legislation. The Urban Institute has predicted an increase of 1.1 million children in poverty. The National Coalition for the Homeless declares that "without increased resources for child care, affordable housing, health care and education, this reform will prove to be most effective at moving people from welfare . . . into deeper poverty and homelessness." And Hugh Price, the president of the National Urban League, predicts that "desperate mothers" will "turn to hustling, prostitution, drug dealing, or panhandling." He says that "Washington has decided to end the War on Poverty and begin a war on poor children." How do you respond?***

Anderson (California): The Urban Institute's and the National Urban League's predictions on poverty and homelessness do not take into account the behavioral changes that will result from time limits and other new rules under this welfare legislation. The panic is unwarranted.

Welfare recipients are no different than anybody else. They will do what it takes to survive. Once government gets out of their way, welfare recipients will respond accordingly.

I take issue with the National Urban League's assumption that "desperate mothers" will "turn to

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hustling, prostitution, drug dealing, or panhandling." I see this as a put-down of AFDC recipients. These people are not criminals or lowlifes. I have always said that AFDC recipients are capable, rational, and smart enough to make it on their own without government's help. Advocates need to quit demeaning them as if they are helpless, hopeless, and criminal without government intervention.

McMahan (Texas): The "war on poor children" began, however unintentionally, with the expansion of the welfare state, which trapped families in dependency by discouraging work and marriage. Studies show children raised in a welfare environment suffer from decreased cognitive abilities and increased behavioral and emotional problems. In Texas, we are committed to taking care of those who truly cannot take care of themselves. As for the rest of the welfare population, we will no longer treat them as victims and wards of the state, but instead as responsible individuals capable of self-improvement and self-sufficiency. That's why Texas requires each welfare recipient to sign a personal responsibility contract outlining what the state will do for them (give them a hand up through job placement, child care, transportation, et cetera) and what they will do in return (work, learn, or train for benefits; identify the father of their child; have their children immunized; stay off drugs; et cetera).

Taylor (Mississippi): The "war on children" began when the federal government rewarded nonwork and nonmarriage. While perhaps well meaning, those who advocate raising family income artificially through welfare have made the state a competitor with the father and mother as the key providers for the family. In Mississippi, the value of welfare benefits to unwed mothers now exceeds the income of 17 to 30 percent of all single men.

Too many liberals still have a paternalistic plantation mentality. They think welfare recipients are incapable of achieving self-sufficiency, and thus forever dependent on government largesse. I invite those liberals to mull over the words of Franklin D. Roosevelt: "Welfare is a narcotic, a subtle destroyer of the human spirit."

Turner (Wisconsin): Half the counties in Wisconsin have reduced their AFDC caseloads *by more than 70 percent* since 1987 without succumbing to the dire predictions of the liberals. Since January of this year, Milwaukee has been reducing its caseload at an annual rate of 24 percent, and general assistance for childless adults was ended entirely last year without Wisconsin's largest city heaving-to.

What liberals have entirely failed to grasp is that social maladies, including poverty, are the result of learned behavior in which enforced idleness is a contributing factor. Far from sending nonworking adults "over the edge," required work thrusts people into constructive social interactions that can lift this depression born of isolation, and can identify other problems for resolution.

Q: ***Many conservatives have argued that the principal objective of welfare reform should be to bring down the rate of illegitimacy and divorce. Do you think this will be achieved by the new welfare bill in your state? If so, how? If not, how else can families in your state be put back together?***

Anderson (California): The aim of welfare reform is to make life better for children. Right now, AFDC children are left out of the mainstream because their parents are not required to work. They see their parents being unproductive and getting food, clothing, and shelter without having to work. Children become so unfamiliar with work that they lack the skills and discipline they need to succeed in a job. Nor do children ever see marriage, or understand its value. Having children out of marriage becomes the norm, and men are devalued. They never see a father in the home. Government has become the father, the provider of the family. By emphasizing work, welfare reform will lead to cooperation between a father and a mother, and create an interdependence for the well-being of the children, which will lead to cultural mainstreaming and stronger families.

AFDC recipients are capable and smart enough to make it on their own without government's help.
—Eloise Anderson

McMahan (Texas): No piece of legislation, no matter how bold, can single-handedly reverse the breakdown of the family. At a minimum, we can at least eliminate incentives to destructive behavior. To its credit, the federal welfare bill does that by setting tough work standards, requiring teen parents to live at home or in an adult-supervised setting, and providing incentive bonuses to states

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that reduce out-of-wedlock births.

Governor Bush has worked to enact similar changes in Texas, but he also recognizes that out-of-wedlock births, hard-core drug use, and violent juvenile crime are fundamentally moral and spiritual problems that can't be solved by government alone. The solution to these problems lies in changing the culture, renewing our commitment to God, and returning to our bedrock values. In Texas, we are working not only to reform welfare, but also to nurture institutions that have traditionally and more effectively communicated our basic values: charities, churches, synagogues, and neighborhoods. These institutions hold the most promise for changing lives through compassion that is, in Marvin Olasky's words, "challenging, personal, and spiritual."

Taylor (Mississippi): More than 44 percent of births in Mississippi in 1993 were to unmarried mothers, and for teenagers, more than three-fourths of all births were illegitimate. Welfare has eroded the social foundation of marriage and made it financially irrelevant.

The welfare bill now allows our state to craft eligibility and benefits regulations to encourage marriage rather than reward irresponsible behavior. We hope this will begin to overcome the corrosive effect of welfare on the family structure.

Turner (Wisconsin): Under W2, income is only received through work, so there is no economic incentive for illegitimacy. Nor can teens set up independent households with cash benefits under W2—they must live with their parents or in a supervised home for unwed mothers.

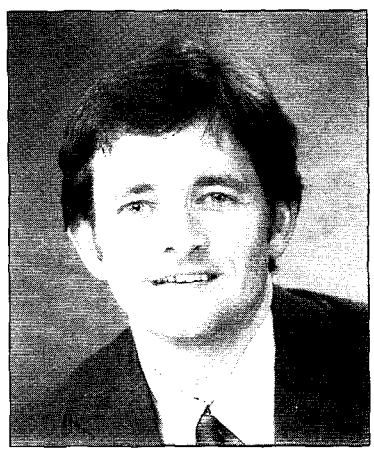
The authors of the welfare-reform bill should be commended for offering financial rewards to states that reduce illegitimacy. Although state policymakers have only an indirect influence on illegitimacy, this provision puts the subject on the table for ongoing discussion and debate. Let us look forward to the day when illegitimacy replaces poverty as our most-discussed social indicator.

Q: The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that most states will accept a financial penalty rather than try to comply with the work requirements of the welfare legislation. Do you believe your state will be able to move the required proportion of recipients from welfare to work? And if so, how will you do this?

Anderson (California): Meeting the tough work requirements will be a challenge, but we have every intention of succeeding. Our current welfare-to-work program has achieved tremendous results in California counties even where unemployment rates are high. Last year, when Los Angeles County shifted from a classroom-training emphasis to a "work first" approach, the number of job placements for welfare recipients skyrocketed by 400 percent to 25,000. In rural Calaveras County, job placements from 1992-93 to 1994-95 increased by 90 percent.

Our Employment Development Department is identifying entry-level jobs that are available in different communities, and the skills needed for those jobs. Relocation is one avenue to those jobs that we are looking into. But government can only help bridge the gap. The private sector is the job provider. Neighborhoods, communities, and churches also play a role in helping recipients become successful. And the real work in moving out of dependency must be done by the recipients. We must shift from the notion that government has the answers and will rescue people from themselves. We can provide people with information, but it is up to them to use it.

McMahan (Texas): The bar is high. The federal welfare bill sets a work participation rate of 25 percent for Fiscal Year 1997, rising to 50 percent for FY 2002. Yet the highly acclaimed work program in Riverside, California, managed to place only 30 percent of welfare recipients in long-term jobs. Given the flexibility to tailor work programs to the needs of our welfare population, Texas is committed to doing its best to meet the standard. We will have to restore the virtue and value of fatherhood. We will have to contract with private companies to place welfare recipients in real jobs, paying only for results. We will have to challenge and create incentives for Texas's private sector to provide more slots for on-the-job training for welfare recipients.



Ending the federal entitlement to AFDC acknowledges that someone outside Washington, D.C., may better help those in need.
—Vance McMahan

Taylor (Mississippi): Mississippi is already meeting the mandate with our WorkFirst pilot program. Under WorkFirst, implemented in 1995, the emphasis is on work, not on open-

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ended entitlements. The clients' first contact after being approved for benefits is with a job-placement specialist, not a social worker, as in the past.

The ability of states to meet the mandated work requirements is grossly underestimated by the Congressional Budget Office. Federal bureaucrats are undoubtedly fearful that states will, in fact, be successful in this endeavor and therefore set the stage for future transfer of additional programs to state control.

Turner (Wisconsin): Work participation standards are an important tool for states. And universal recipient participation in some work activity is the only proven way for most programs to achieve dramatic results.

The CBO and many states are unnecessarily concerned about the cost of providing work requirement slots. These slots are by and large cheap to run—the major expense is that of subsidizing associated child care in order to permit the covered individuals to work.

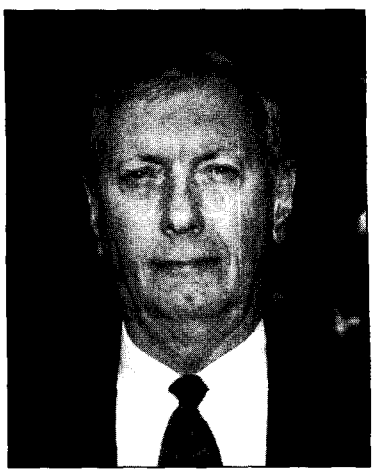
This concern also ignores a central dynamic of welfare reform. When individuals are faced with a choice of receiving welfare benefits in exchange for working in a work-requirement slot, or else going to work for wages in the private sector economy, most will choose the latter. Under these circumstances, the caseload quickly shrinks.

Q: ***Now that states have full responsibility for welfare, what elements of this responsibility would you like to turn over to churches, businesses, and other private organizations?***

Anderson (California): States now have the primary responsibility for welfare, but they cannot do it alone. Faith-based groups can provide counseling, temporary food and shelter, and clothing for those in need. Businesses need to be receptive to hiring. Goodwill Industries has worked with us closely to help those who have barriers to employment. It has a long history of helping the disabled find mainstream employment. Using nonprofits such as Goodwill is vital to the success of the new programs. We need to stop thinking that government owes us something and start thinking about duty, personal responsibility, and communities coming together to help those in crisis.

McMahan (Texas): Media reports on the welfare bill have overlooked a significant provision—the "charitable choice" clause. Under "charitable choice," private, charitable, and faith-based groups can compete for contracts or participate in voucher programs whenever a state uses non-government providers to deliver welfare services. If we are to replace welfare with a more compassionate and effective system, faith-based institutions will have to be part of the answer—whether it's a church providing day care or Victory Fellowship helping people kick drug addiction. As Governor Bush has said: "Government can hand out money, but it cannot put hope in our hearts or a sense of purpose in our lives."

Governor Bush rejects the statist view that government has exclusive jurisdiction for the poor; rather, government shares responsibility with society's "little platoons" that do the heavy lifting of changing lives from the inside out. Texas's mission is to facilitate and cultivate these untapped resources, not to displace them, and certainly not to secularize their religious character. The governor has appointed a 16-member advisory task force on faith-based community-service programs to determine how best to free faith-based programs and organizations from unreasonable government regulations and allow them to go about the business of changing lives.



The "war on children" really began when the federal government started rewarding nonwork and nonmarriage.
—Don Taylor

Taylor (Mississippi): Mississippi's "Faith and Families" program matches volunteer AFDC recipients to local churches and synagogues, thus restoring the historical role of religious institutions to help unfortunate members of their communities. To date, almost 300 churches and synagogues have been enlisted to "adopt" welfare recipients in their communities to help them transition into the work force.

The business community will now be able to determine and provide the type of training necessary to move welfare recipients into the work force. In lieu of the ineffective training provided by a variety of government programs for jobs that often do not exist, local businesses can provide *real* skills for *real* jobs.

Turner (Wisconsin): Wisconsin now requires an AFDC applicant to enter into an interactive problem-solving session with a caseworker, who

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helps the applicant look for alternatives to welfare, including immediate employment. It has been shockingly effective—in Milwaukee 28 percent of those exiting the problem-solving session decide they can do without AFDC after all, and elsewhere the proportion is as high as 50 percent. Interviews indicate that many AFDC applicants *like the idea that someone is helping them decide to do what they knew was right all along.*

The point here is that many trapped inside the system are looking for some kind of moral guidance. But by and large government is not equipped to provide this guidance—nor should it be. Under W2, churches are being asked to help develop homes for teen mothers and private charities are offering work opportunities for those needing to practice work before entering competitive private employment. Finally, the entire system, which was formerly run exclusively by state and county government, will be open under W2 to any private providers of services on a competitive bid basis.

Q: What do you most dislike about the legislation, and why?

Anderson (California): There are still strings attached that work against California. The "maintenance of effort" requirement was not removed from the SSI/SSP program for the aged, blind, and disabled, giving us no flexibility to make the program more effective and cost-efficient. This will mean a loss in savings of $277 million for California.

The federal legislation is geared more toward state-run welfare systems and not county-run systems such as California's. We have far different issues than state-run programs and we need to be treated differently.

We are also a border state with nearly 40 percent of the legal immigrant population of this country. I believe that sponsors of immigrants should be held accountable for taking care of their own. If legal immigrants want to enjoy the benefits of their adopted homeland, they should take the next step and become U.S. citizens. However, I also believe immigration is a federal responsibility. The responsibility of caring for legal immigrants who have been allowed to enter federal programs should be a federal responsibility, not a state or local responsibility.

This welfare reform bill came to us in a 400-page document. If this is a first step, then I can accept it. If this is the end result, however, then the feds really haven't changed the rules.

California needs relief from federal mandates, not more or different mandates.

McMahan (Texas): The federal welfare bill does not allow states to receive credit for persons diverted from welfare or those who find a job after being on welfare for less than six months. States should be rewarded for such efforts. It is more expensive and more difficult to get someone off welfare than to take steps to keep them from ever going on. The bill also ties the hands of states by requiring a "maintenance of effort." This limits states' flexibility to design and implement their own programs and set their own spending priorities. The bill contains a number of other strings that ensure continued federal involvement.

States were not given any new flexibility on Medicaid. Federal mandates have made Medicaid the 800-pound gorilla of most state budgets—at the expense of education and other programs. Medicaid now costs more than AFDC, food stamps, and SSI combined, and it keeps growing. In Texas, Medicaid spending as a percent of the state budget increased from 13 percent to 21 percent from 1990 to 1995. Fundamental welfare reform should include giving states freedom from oppressive Medicaid mandates so they can maximize the use of limited health-care dollars.

Taylor (Mississippi): The reporting and data requirements of the 1996 legislation are burdensome, expensive, and time-consuming. The data required by the law exceed the needs of the state to effectively administer and efficiently monitor the program. These make-work requirements are a monumental waste of tax dollars designed to ensure that returning funds to the states will not adversely affect the number of federal bureaucrats in Washington.

Some habits die hard.

Half the counties in Wisconsin have reduced their caseloads more than 70 percent since 1987 without succumbing to the liberals' dire predictions.
—Jason Turner

Turner (Wisconsin): There is so much to like about the current federal legislation that one is loath to criticize, lest we all wake up and find out that the end of AFDC was just a wishful dream. So let us just take this opportunity to thank all of those who worked so hard for this day, including the leadership of the Congress and those engaged in the intellectual debates, including The Heritage Foundation, the publisher of this magazine.

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Absence of Judgment

What social workers believe about the poor will hamper welfare reform.

By James L. Payne

In this season of welfare reform, it's worth taking a close look at the professionals in the middle of it, the trained social workers. Just about everyone outside the welfare system is hoping for an end to dependency-causing giveaways, and for their replacement by programs that expect something of recipients in return for their benefits. But will the social workers who administer and implement the new policies deliver?

They are in a position to undermine welfare reform in a number ways. For one thing, they can fail to be inspiring mentors to those welfare recipients who need to be motivated and guided. Instead of urging them to take responsibility for their lives and get to work, they can encourage whining and blaming others. Instead of chiding them for bad habits and urging constructive change, they can excuse their dysfunctional lifestyles.

Another way social workers can undermine reform is by overusing exemptions to new requirements. The welfare-reform legislation is laden with "escape clauses" that permit case workers to exempt clients from one or another requirement on the grounds of hardship, family needs, and so on. By applying these exemptions generously, case workers can defeat the aim of the legislation.

Finally, social workers can spearhead political campaigns to overturn welfare requirements. Journalists generally rely on social workers and program administrators to arrange interviews with clients and to provide information on how the program is working. If social workers oppose reform, they can focus attention on hardship cases, forcing politicians to repeal or amend it to avoid looking "heartless." For all these reasons, the future of welfare reform depends not just on what the legislation says, but on what social workers believe.

There are some 600,000 social workers in this country, filling a wide variety of social-service roles, from eligibility clerk in government programs to career counselors in high schools. At the center of this profession are the schools of social work whose faculty prepare students for work in government social-service agencies. They award 11,000 baccalaureate and 13,000 master's degrees in social work yearly.

This policy-oriented core of the profession includes a number of influential lobbying organizations. The main groups are the American Public Welfare Association (APWA), which affiliates over 800 state and local welfare agencies, including all the state departments of human services, and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), with a membership of 155,000 social workers. As a measure of their political activism, one poll of NASW members found that 64 percent contributed money to political campaigns in 1984, and 33 percent reported lobbying for legislation. Prominent policymakers with a social-work background (an M.S.W. degree) include Senator Barbara Mikulski of Maryland and Congressmen Ron Dellums of California and Edolphus Towns of New York, all Democrats.

Mocking Their Past

It comes as no surprise that members of this occupational sector lean strongly to the left. The NASW regularly backs Democratic candidates; in 1996, its delegate assembly endorsed Clinton-Gore over the GOP ticket by a vote of 168 to 6. Even more significant than their political bias, however, is their professional bias. Today's social workers hold views about poverty—what causes it

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and what they should do about it—that refute the spirit of welfare reform.

The social-work profession grew out of the assistance activities of 19th-century charitable organizations. As Marvin Olasky, David Green, Gertrude Himmelfarb, and others have pointed out, private, voluntary groups proliferated during that time, successfully ministering to the needs of the poor. Leading these organizations were dozens of reformers who articulated an empirically based approach to assisting the poor. These "charity theorists" included Mary Richmond, Josephine Shaw Lowell, S. Humphreys Gurteen, Annie Fields, and Edward Devine in the United States, and Octavia Hill, Helen Bosanquet, Thomas Mackay, and Arthur Paterson in Great Britain. From their extensive personal experience with the poor, these early social workers reached a clear consensus on the principles of helping the poor.

The beliefs of modern social workers are practically the opposite of the principles of social assistance developed by the founders of the profession. Instead of building on its past, modern social work mocks it.

To Give or Not To Give

The 19th-century charity theorists advocated a highly personalized approach to working with the needy. They emphasized the capacity of poor individuals to respond to life's demands, and believed in pushing them to achieve independence and a better life. The social worker was first and foremost a mentor and advisor, one who guided individuals to improve themselves and make better choices.

One point on which they all agreed was that giveaways of material assistance—cash, food, housing, clothing—are generally harmful to the poor. Of course they saw that the poor had need of these things, but they also saw that it was vital that the poor fill these needs for themselves. Well-meaning reformers who stepped in with some form of dole undermined their self-esteem and impaired their capacity to thrive independently. "My friends," said Octavia Hill in an 1876 speech, "I have lived face to face with the poor for now some years, and I have not learned to think gifts of necessaries, such as a man usually provides for his own family, helpful to them. I have abstained from such, and expect those who love the poor and know them individually will do so more and more in the time to come."

With the rise of massive government welfare programs, social workers abandoned this view. One of the first principles to be jettisoned was the idea that neediness could play a positive, motivating role. For the modern social worker, any kind of suffering or being in need is wrong. "Human suffering is undesirable and should be prevented, or at least alleviated, whenever possible," declares Herbert Bisno in *The Philosophy of Social Work* (Public Affairs Press, 1952). This declaration misses the complexity of human motivation. Extreme forms of suffering are indeed incapacitating and therefore harmful. But intermediate levels of deprivation—or the anticipation of such—motivate constructive choices, from getting up in the morning to go to work, to avoiding bad habits like gambling, alcohol abuse, and overeating.

Armed with the idea that neediness is always wrong, social work then derived the notion that filling someone else's needs is always right. Although social work still aims to enable people to cope with the world, uplift has taken second place to the idea of filling material needs. The NASW's "Definition of Social Work" (approvingly repeated in the introductory text *Social Work*, published by Allyn and Bacon in 1995), asserts that the first "end" of social-work practice is "helping people obtain tangible services"; it puts "counseling and psychotherapy" second.

Photo by Bettmann Archive

In the past, social workers were first and foremost mentors and advisors who guided clients toward personal responsibility.

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Another introductory text announces the giveaway mission in its title: *Social Welfare: A Response to Human Need* (Allyn and Bacon, 1994). Like so many of the textbooks, it downplays the idea that the poor should be expected to work for a living. Indeed, "work" is never mentioned as a solution to poverty. The book labels the belief "that each person should be responsible for meeting his or her own needs" as "rugged individualism" and dismisses it: "This situation is neither possible in contemporary society nor desirable in terms of optimal human growth and development."

In contrast to 19th-century writings, modern social-work texts never point to a situation when the social worker should not give material aid to a needy person. In the indexes to these volumes, there are no entries under "dependency" or "incentives" or "motivation." In *The Encyclopedia of Social Work*, published by the NASW, the entry for "Income Maintenance System" considers the idea that "income maintenance assistance robs recipients of their incentive to work" an unfounded "suspicion."

Privately, social workers will mention cases where welfare encourages idleness and other dysfunctional behavior like having babies one cannot support. But in official pronouncements, social-work leaders avoid or dismiss the notion that benefit programs might be drawing vulnerable individuals into dependency and even ruin.

No Judge of Lifestyles

The 19th-century charity workers expressed strong convictions about what behavior would help people rise from poverty. They had clear opinions on the obvious vices—drunkenness, gambling, extramarital sex, idleness, and so forth—as well as on many ordinary choices. For example, Octavia Hill believed it was unhealthy for families to live all in one room—as most of them wished to do in order to save the cost of renting a second room. As a volunteer housing manager, she used her powers of gentle persuasion to get tenants to pay extra and take two rooms. (After the move was made, she reported, tenants themselves would typically admit it was a wise use of their money.)

Says one textbook: "The person's worth is validated equally by his or her decision to achieve potential or to permit it to lie unused, by a decision to achieve or merely vegetate."

This emphasis on values has all but disappeared from modern social work. The orientation today is on not swaying welfare recipients in their choices. One value of social work, says John Brown's *Handbook of Social Work Practice* (Charles C. Thomas, 1992), is a "nonjudgmental attitude," which means that "social workers should not judge clients' behavior by imposing a moral value on it." The introductory text *The Practice of Social Work* (Dorsey Press, 1985) criticizes "the layperson's views that a social worker seeks to 'remold' clients into a pattern chosen by the worker." The professional view is that clients "should be permitted to determine their own lifestyles as far as possible."

"Social work assumes the inherent worth and importance of the individual," says the *Introduction to Social Work* (Prentice Hall, 1991). From this seemingly unobjectionable premise, the authors reach a startlingly indulgent conclusion: "The person's worth is validated equally by his or her decision to achieve potential or to permit it to lie unused, by a decision to achieve or merely vegetate."

The notion that social workers must be neutral paralyzes them as advisors or mentors. Of course, in any advising situation a dogmatic style is generally counterproductive, and no one piece of advice fits everyone. The 19th-century workers, with their personal, individualized approach, knew this well. They stressed the importance of tact and patience in projecting healthy values. But they were in no doubt about the need to project these values. Today's social workers have genuinely internalized a value-free approach. This leads them to be complacent about programs that validate and reinforce destructive lifestyles, such as income support for unwed mothers or for alcoholics and drug addicts.

Never Their Fault

The 19th-century charity theorists knew that there were many environmental causes of poverty. They were fully aware of the unhealthy living conditions of the poor, and the dreadful lack of opportunities they faced. To remedy such environmental problems, they advocated public policies that addressed them, such as sanitary improvements and the development of parks and gardens. But they also knew that many poor people were held back by their own shortcomings: by vices, by family breakup, by unhealthy habits and shortsighted choices. In their policies of individual social assistance, therefore, they endeavored to improve character.

In 1875, after a decade of serving as a befriending manager of low-income housing units, Octavia Hill pointed to the importance of personal behavior. "The people's homes are bad,

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partly because they are badly built and arranged; they are tenfold worse because the tenants' habits and lives are what they are. Transplant them tomorrow to healthy and commodious homes, and they would pollute and destroy them. There needs, and will need for some time, a reformatory work which will demand that loving zeal of individuals which cannot be had for money, and cannot be legislated for by Parliament."

Most modern social workers have abandoned this balanced, logical view. The textbooks smugly criticize 19th-century charity workers for their "judgmental attitudes toward the poor." They find it lamentable that social workers in those benighted days "held to the notion that individual failure was the reason for poverty." The modern view is that the needy cannot be held responsible for their problems. Indeed, anyone who suggests otherwise is engaging in the cardinal no-no of "blaming the victim."

An environmental explanation of poverty underlies social workers' policy recommendations. Whatever the problem, it's not up to the needy person to reform or strive; "society" has to give more. In a 1990 editorial on homelessness in *Social Work*, the magazine of the NASW, editor-in-chief Ann Hartman criticized programs that aimed to treat drug addiction and alcoholism because "they define homelessness in terms of private troubles"—an unacceptable approach. "Homelessness is a result of the steady disappearance and unavailability of low-cost housing," she declared. "We must be clear that homelessness cannot be reduced appreciably by treating individual troubles."

In expounding such positions, social-work professionals often exhibit a weak grasp of economics. In *Social Welfare: A Response to Human Need*, we find this tautological explanation: "The distribution of income, the way that income is distributed, is what causes poverty." Social-work professor Mark Robert Rank of Washington University likens the economy to a game of musical chairs with a fixed number of opportunities: "This musical chairs analogy can be applied to what has been taking place in this country economically and socially. Some people will lose in the game, given that there is unemployment and a lack of jobs." This static, zero-sum conception of economic life ignores the fact that people continually create new jobs for themselves and for others—if we don't undermine their motivation to do so.

The determinism of modern social work is also devastating to the poor. If you want someone to improve, to make an effort to overcome a problem, he has to feel that he is capable of influencing his fate. In the game of life, just as in sports, it is not useful to dwell on the past and to blame others. What would we think of a coach who told his team that the reason they lost was the rainy weather and the bad calls of the referee? Even if this were mainly the truth, it would be unhealthy to dwell upon it. A coach who followed this approach would find that his team loses even when the weather is fine and the referees are fair.

Welfare Reform: Bigger Is Better

Social workers today may occasionally pay lip service to welfare reform, but only if it leads to greater spending. In its 1994 policy recommendations, the NASW declared that block grants to the states must never mean cutting benefits: "States should be allowed to diverge from the national base only if they scale benefits upward from it." It fought experiments that demand something from recipients, such as a compulsory work requirement for the recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).

Social workers of the 19th century emphasized the capacity of poor individuals to respond to life's demands and achieve an independent life.

In its 1990 recommendations for "Improving the Food Stamp Program," the APWA urged 15 substantive program changes, every one of which had the effect of increasing benefits or the number of beneficiaries. In the latest round of proposed welfare reforms, it has fought virtually all efforts to restrict welfare. It opposes family caps and lifetime limits on benefits; it opposes any effort to end benefits to single individuals, noncitizens, unwed teen mothers, and drug and alcohol abusers. It even opposes denying benefits when these benefits are already duplicated by other welfare programs.

In a potentially promising shift, the APWA has accepted the idea that some kind of work obligation is appropriate for certain welfare recipients. But in practice, this principle is undermined by the profession's more deeply held conviction that welfare recipients are fragile and incapable, and must be shielded from any possible suffering. Even if a client refuses to participate in an employment plan without good cause, the APWA recommends cutting benefits by only 25 percent.

Furthermore, when the APWA agrees that welfare recipients should be expected to work, it does not mean that they should go to work tomorrow. The APWA approves of a work requirement only if government programs first supply a vast array of additional services to help

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recipients find and hold a job. For the APWA, welfare reform means a larger, not smaller, government welfare industry. "We know," said a 1987 APWA report urging "real reform," "the investments we propose will cost more money—more money than the federal and state governments currently invest in low-income families with children."

A spokeswoman for Delaware's "First Step" program gives an idea of the support that welfare administrators feel is necessary to implement the welfare-to-work concept. In this program—which enrolls less than 5 percent of Delaware's AFDC recipients—the agency offers a broad smorgasbord of additional benefits to cajole recipients into taking care of themselves: "basic academic and life skills development," "career counseling," "child care," "transportation," "remedial medical such as eyeglasses or eye exams, physical exams, dental work," even "clothing." "If we don't have these supportive services," says the Delaware official, "then the participant cannot succeed." "Cannot" is a strong word when you consider that tens of millions of working poor get and hold jobs without any of these services.

A Psychology of Coddling

The welfare industry's premise that recipients must be coddled makes observers skeptical about the latest round of welfare-to-work programs. Remember, these programs were first introduced in 1962, and renewed in legislation passed in 1967, 1971, 1981, and 1988. After 35 years, they're still not successful. A 1994 GAO study of the JOBS program—the current incarnation of welfare-to-work proposals—found that only 11 percent of AFDC recipients were even signed up for the program, and the overwhelming majority of these were not in actual on-the-job training, but cycling through support programs such as counseling, job-search preparation, higher education, eye exams, and so on.

Some officials in the welfare industry dispute this critical view. One who argues that social workers have now adopted "a surprisingly different approach" is Sid Johnson, the executive director of the American Public Welfare Association. "The dramatic change in 1988" with the Family Assistance Act, he says, "was that a system that for 50 years had been, by public policy, aimed at providing income maintenance made a major shift toward the promotion of self-sufficiency."

But can 50 years of training and ideology be overcome so readily? In most parts of the country, social workers are still wedded to a philosophy of nonjudgmental giveaways. In Michigan, social workers have largely undermined the state's policy of requiring unwed teen mothers to live with responsible adults simply by exempting the teens in question. In Ingham County, 74 of the 85 indigent mothers under age 18 were allowed to keep their welfare checks and their independent lifestyle because social workers decided that adult supervision would jeopardize their "emotional and physical well-being."

In those few places where welfare reform has succeeded, social workers are noticeably absent. In California, all 58 counties are supposed to be pushing welfare recipients into work under the GAIN program begun in 1988, but only one, Riverside, has a well-documented record of success. I asked John Rodgers, assistant to the program's director, what proportion of Riverside's caseworkers are trained social workers. "That's basically a nonexistent classification, in GAIN," he replied. "There are some counties in California that . . . took social workers in their existing organization and moved them over into GAIN. We did not do that at all. We had an open recruitment, and in fact strongly encouraged people from the community who had never worked in a social-services agency to apply for the jobs. We were looking for people that had a variety of skills, but specifically people that had experience in the employment sector, of helping people go to work."

Another sign that social workers aren't behind meaningful welfare reform is the lobbying of the NASW. The organization strenuously opposes the welfare reform passed by Congress and signed by President Clinton last August. The NASW has vowed to undertake a "state-by-state monitoring of the welfare reform bill's impact on poor women and children." This is another way of saying that social workers are preparing to provide the media a diet of hardship cases attributable to the reform.

Social-work textbooks teach "nonjudgmental attitudes." They say "social workers should not judge clients' behavior."

Modern social workers may mean well, but they have absorbed a deficient approach to social assistance policy. They will need a big push from citizens and policymakers to recapture the 19th-century focus on personal improvement and self-sufficiency.

James L. Payne *is a Bradley Fellow at The Heritage Foundation specializing in welfare policies. He has just edited* The Befriending Leader: Social Assistance Without Dependency *(Lytton), a volume of writings by Octavia Hill, the 19th-century British social worker.*

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The Freshmen's *First Principles*

By George Radanovich

Congressional conservatives remind America what their election was all about.

"Writers have so confounded society with government as to leave little or no distinction between them." So wrote Thomas Paine in "Common Sense" in 1776. He could be writing today about those who look to government to solve all of America's problems.

The House GOP freshmen reject this view. We know that government is only a part of society. Society is not a part of government. Government serves as only a portion of the entire society, and is not the entire society.

Think of society as a chair. The legs of the chair represent four different and separate institutions. Government is just one leg; the others are families and the institutions that support them, religious and civic institutions, and business.

A stable chair frees you to sit, relax, eat, whatever you want to do, without worrying about falling on the floor. Similarly, the four institutions of society contribute equally to its stability. A child born into a society where all four institutions are healthy has the greatest opportunity for success in life. Consider the child's relationship to these four institutions: When family institutions are healthy, a child is more likely to learn respect for his parents. When government institutions are healthy, a child is more likely to obey the law. In healthy businesses, a child is more likely to learn the work ethic. In healthy religious institutions, a child is more likely to maintain a clear conscience before his or her God. With healthy and equal institutions, we can provide to every individual the freedom and security to pursue the promised opportunity for life, liberty, and happiness.

During the past 100 years, America's government has become disproportionately large in relation to the country's other institutions. The result has been a burdensome governmental structure involved in virtually every aspect of our lives. The fundamental principles of the New Deal and Great Society programs—the solving of social ills with governmental programs—has resulted in a chair so unstable that a single finger can tip it over. Of all the money spent by government, 70 percent is controlled at the federal level, while 30 percent is controlled at the state and local levels. The 537 elected officials in Washington have substituted their "wisdom" for the wisdom of the thousands of local elected officials in our communities. The growth of the governmental leg has drawn too much away from the other core institutions, reducing their effectiveness and creating instability in America.

Blueprint To Renew Society

In order to provide greater freedom and security, the 74 members of the Republican Freshman Class stand for structural reform in America.

We believe that government is too big in relation to other institutions in America. We believe that reducing government should not, and cannot, occur without renewal of family, religious/ civic, and business institutions in American society.

A balanced budget that privatizes, localizes, and eliminates federal government activities is the blueprint to renew society. To renew society, however, the conscience of the American people must be raised, increasing personal responsibility and hence the effectiveness of all of our institutions.

Our vision is one in which family, religious/civic, business, and government institutions contribute equally to the foundation of a New America.

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Our families have been decimated over the last 30 years by divorce, teen pregnancy, drug abuse, juvenile crime, and failing educational institutions. Religious and civic institutions are not functioning to their full potential. In his article "Bowling Alone" for the *Journal of Democracy*, Harvard professor Robert Putnam documented the significant decline in "social capital" and in participation in the civic associations of "civil society." In the political arena, declining voter participation and the community's feelings of disempowerment are symptoms of the deterioration of these institutions. In the business realm, our current fascination with "downsizing," layoffs, and superheated stock markets is a result of unstable institutions. The political community is particularly concerned about job insecurity, which has probably exacerbated the decline of business as well as religious and civic institutions.

These concerns, I believe, prompted Americans to send a Republican-led Congress to Washington in November 1994. Our new Republican majority went about aggressively downsizing government. We acted on the promises of the Contract With America, like blockgranting programs to the 50 states. We set about reforming or eliminating the myriad federal welfare, job-training, and housing programs. We focused on deregulation and tax reform, trying to encourage the marketplace to shed government control. We even considered eliminating the Departments of Education, Commerce, Energy, and Housing and Urban Development.

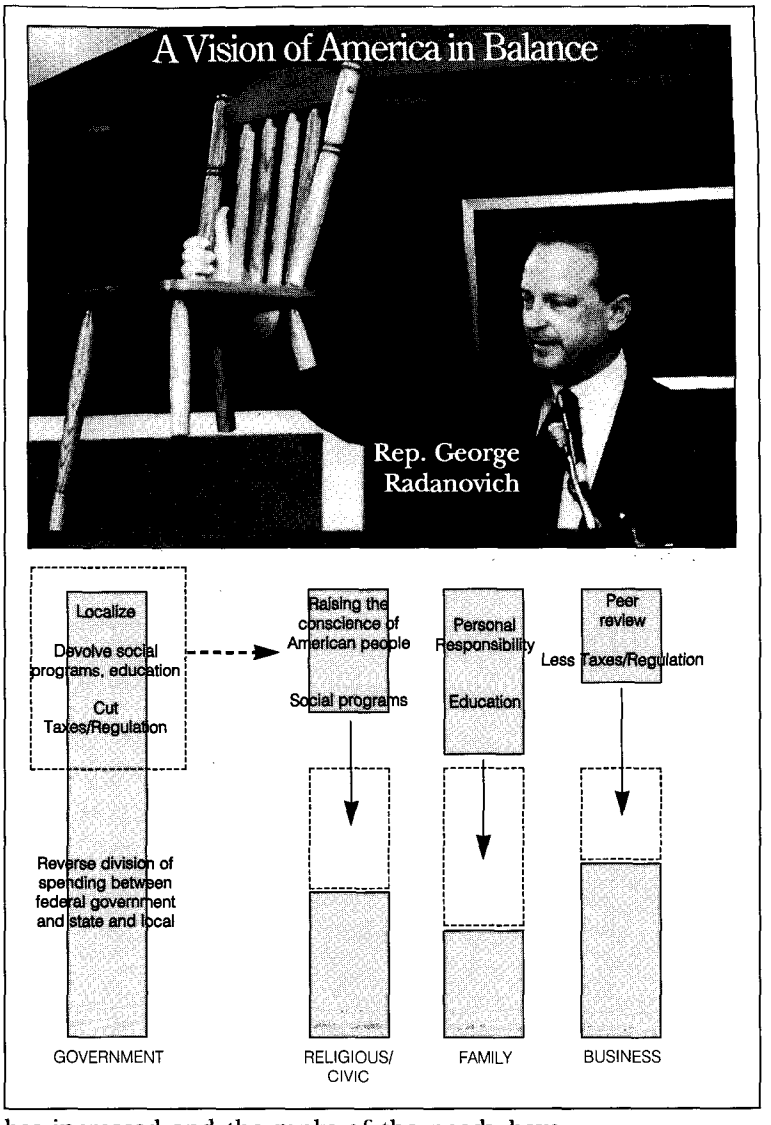
Unfortunately, House Republicans failed to communicate a vision of America that included its other core institutions. We did not give enough thought to how families would react to the withdrawal of government from their lives. We did not articulate the need to re-create religious and civic institutions, or to develop self-regulation in the business realm. In short, we only looked at the institution we could influence directly: government. Until we can explain to the American people how we can rebuild the institutions of community while reducing government, then maybe we shouldn't be reducing government at all.

Through its disapproval of the government shutdowns in 1995 and 1996, the American people have told us, "We agree with downsizing government, but we're not going to let you do it unless you can show us how America will be a better place for everybody as a result." Thus the task we freshmen have set ourselves is to articulate our vision of the "New America."

The Legislative Program

The Freshman Class Vision articulates two essential elements (see box, previous page). One element is legislative reform, and the other is a higher level of personal responsibility in society. Both must happen simultaneously. The legislative program continues to be our priority in Washington. We must downsize, restructure, and reform government while we begin to rebuild the other core institutions. Four examples will give some idea of how this might happen:

Social programs. During the 30 or so years of government expansion into welfare, food stamps, and Medicaid, dependency upon government has increased and the ranks of the needy have expanded. Many people believe that the values reflected in social programs and in helping with the care of the needy have a basis in Scripture, not in the Constitution. The Good Samaritan, after all, is found in the Bible. The New America vision calls for the care of the poor to shift from government to religious and civic institutions and the family, where it had historically resided prior to the development of the welfare state.



Churches and faith-based organizations, non-

Photo by Chas Geer Photography

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profit social-service agencies, and charities should have a prime role in providing for those in need. But if we are to begin to rely on nongovernmental institutions, then we must create legislation that encourages this transfer. How can we structure tax policy, for example, to provide a smooth transition from government programs to the religious, civic, and family institutions of this country?

In my opinion, we should encourage religious and civic institutions to take up social programs by giving healthy tax deductions to those contributing money to churches, charities, and other nonprofit groups. Under this policy, institutions caring for the needy expand, while the revenue propping up the government sector shrinks.

Regulation and tax relief. As we reduce taxes and regulation of business, we reduce the overhead of a regulatory government. At the same time, the market will redirect resources currently consumed by taxes and regulatory compliance toward business expansion.

Education. Properly handled, reforms in education would help restore the institution of the family. The educational system, a governmental structure, must be accountable to parents, not the state. This can be achieved in part through voucher programs. My personal preference is to increase local control, and therefore encourage parental participation. The most telling problem with education, at least in local school districts, is that local elected officials have very little discretion over school spending; most is determined by state and federal mandates. If we send more dollars unencumbered to the local level, we will encourage more parents to get involved in their children's education. This will encourage parents—and their children—to assume personal responsibility for educational decisions.

Localizing. Localizing government, as with education, means shifting responsibilities back to the state and local levels. When we localize decisionmaking, we reduce the overhead of the federal government, thereby reducing its role.

Personal Responsibility

By downsizing government and reinvigorating other institutions to fulfill their proper roles, we have begun to address our obligations as the freshmen elected in 1994. We have taken a necessary, though not sufficient, first step toward a New America.

Still, something is missing. The nongovernmental institutions are not functioning to their full capacity. By encouraging local control and involvement, we may have begun to address issues like juvenile crime and school accountability. Our problems, however, demand another, essential element: personal responsibility.

Congress cannot raise the conscience of the American people, decrease our reliance on governmental institutions, and encourage the development of individual and community-based solutions to community problems. Personal responsibility cannot be legislated in Washington. We can't create good parents by passing a law. We can't make everybody go to church or other religious institutions or be ethical in business. There are some things that even Great Society advocates would agree government simply cannot do. Encouraging and creating personal responsibility is ultimately the task of the nation's religious institutions. It must happen in concert with downsizing government, and won't happen without it.

Family institutions. For members of a family, taking personal responsibility means meeting obligations, participating in family activities, and raising children well.

Business institutions. Encouraging personal responsibility in business institutions would accomplish at least two things. One result would be fewer lawsuits; another would be the development of peer review, such as doctors policing doctors, lawyers policing lawyers, and like businesses policing one another. Peer review would achieve a more cost-effective regulatory scheme than government, with better results.

The central challenge is to downsize government in a fashion that rebuilds other core institutions.

Governmental institutions. We need to spread responsibility among the tens of thousands of state and local elected officials across the country. By raising the conscience of the American people, we can eventually change the distribution of government resources from 70 percent controlled at the federal level to 70 percent controlled at the state and local levels.

The central challenge is to downsize government in a responsible fashion that rebuilds the other core institutions in this country until they all achieve a final equality and balance. It is a huge job. It is one my colleagues and I face every day, and it will require the ongoing support of the American people. But it is a task we must accomplish to restore the stability of the American Dream and to provide freedom and security for all.

***George Radanovich**, the president of the House GOP freshman class, represents the 19th congressional district of California.*

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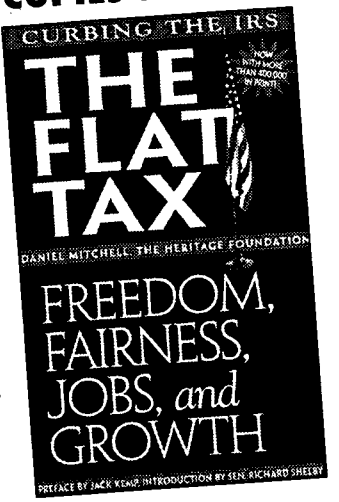

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NEWS FROM THE CITIZENSHIP MOVEMENT

Groups to Watch

Funds for New Leadership

Since 1993, the William H. Donner Foundation, of New York, has granted "New Leadership" fellowships to recognize individuals or groups whose grassroots efforts to better their communities exemplify the principles of the foundation's "human capital" program. These include self-reliance, entrepreneurialism, personal responsibility, and volunteerism.

This year's winners of the fellowships include: the Reverend Ronald Matlack, of Camden, New Jersey, who established a church on the model of a foreign mission to relieve blight in an urban neighborhood; Carl Elkins, the founder of the Homeless Literacy Project, in New York City; James Robinson, who started a volunteer ambulance corps for youth in the Bedford-Stuyvesant area of New York; Terrence Tighe, the founder of an "employability program" that teaches workplace skills and demeanor to K-8 students at an urban Omaha Catholic school; and David Green, the executive director of a network of education services known as the David School for poor families and at-risk youth in Eastern Kentucky. The awards usually amount to $60,000 over three years.

☞ *The William H. Donner Foundation—tel.: 212-719-9290, fax: 212-302-8734.*

Report Card on Devolution

The Urban Institute and the Annie E. Casey Foundation have launched an ambitious $20-million project to evaluate the effects of devolution—or the "New Federalism"—on social services and communities. The multi-year project aims to answer three major questions about the federal government's efforts to devolve many responsibilities to states and municipalities: (1) How will the New Federalism affect state and local budgets? (2) How will it affect state policy priorities and the delivery of services? (3) How will it affect the behavior and well-being of individuals and families? Researchers at the Urban Institute will track the course of devolutionary policies from legislative bodies all the way down to neighborhoods, and analyze their effects according to a number of statistical indicators of social well-being. These indicators include "health status" (e.g. rates of low-birth-weight births and childhood immunization); "child and youth well-being" (child abuse and neglect, teen pregnancies, and teen deaths, for example); "family well-being" (the number of out-of-wedlock births and children in foster care, to name a few); and "economic security" (for example, poverty levels, number of families receiving public assistance, employment rates, and income growth).

The project may not issue a comprehensive report for at least three years, but will release periodic policy briefs and interim reports.

☞ *Lawrence Thompson, director. The Urban Institute—tel.: 202-833-7200, fax: 202-429-0687, e-mail: paffairs@ui.urban.org.*

Commission on Giving

A new commission chaired by Lamar Alexander, the former Tennessee governor and U.S. Education Secretary, is beginning a nine-month study of charitable giving in America. The National Commission on Philanthropy and Civic Renewal is a consulting body to the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, of Milwaukee. The commission's executive director is Bruno Manno, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute.

Members of the commission include Elayne Bennett, president and founder of Best Friends; Kenneth Dam, professor of law at the University of Chicago; Rev. Henry Delaney Jr., pastor of St. Paul's Church in Savannah, Ga.; Kimberly Dennis, executive director of the Philanthropy Roundtable; Chester E. Finn Jr., John M. Olin Fellow at the Hudson Institute; Jerry E. Hill, director of the Austin Street Shelter, in Dallas; Constance Horner, a fellow at the Brookings Institution; Sister Jennie Lechtenberg, executive director of the Puente Learning Center in Los Angeles; William H. Lock, director of Community Enterprises of Greater Milwaukee; Pastor Juan M. Rivera, co-pastor of Victory Fellowship in San Antonio; and Sam A. Williams, president of Central Atlanta Progress Inc.

☞ *National Commission on Philanthropy and Civic Renewal—1150 17th St., NW, #201, Washington, D.C. 20036. Tel.:202-463-1460, fax: 202-463-1464, Web site: http://www.ncpcr.org.*

What Works

A Model Principal

In the *New York Times Magazine,* Sara Mosle, a contributing writer, describes Brooklyn's Science Skills Center and its controversial principal, Michael Johnson. Science Skills, a high school whose students come from some of New York's most impoverished neighborhoods, was started by Johnson with the help of New Visions for Public Schools, a Manhattan-based organization that works with the Board of Education and the private sector to promote school reform. Johnson, a 45-year-old African American, graduated from Empire State College with a degree in science education. Like many educators involved in the effort to reform New York's public schools, he believes that poor children are being shortchanged by the system. Unlike most "progressive" educators, however, Johnson is convinced that the way to help poor minority students is not by loosening standards, but by tightening them.

As a result, Science Skills Center is focused on preparing students to do well on standardized tests, including the New York State Regents exams and the Scholastic Aptitude Tests. At a time when only 20 percent of New York's public-school students receive a Regents diploma, all of Johnson's students—even those designated as special-education students—take, and pass, the Regents exam.

Not surprisingly, this has made Science Skills Center extremely popular with New York's parents, many of whose children have to be turned away simply because the school does not have enough space for all the applicants. But "progressive" educators are horrified by Johnson's emphasis on tests, his autocratic style, and his rigorous, back-to-basics curriculum. They think that schools should prepare students for the world as it already exists. "Parents at my school have some very

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fundamental questions," he observes. "Can my kid read? Can my kid add the grocery bill? Can my kid go to college? Some of my colleagues want to duck those questions and say, 'They're not important.' But we can't just say that we don't believe in measuring our kids against kids in other parts of the city or state, because colleges are making decisions based on those comparisons. . . . Harvard it still looking at scores, so that's what I'm going with."

☛ *"Scores Count" by Sara Mosle,* New York Times Magazine, *September 8, 1996.*

A Classical Curriculum

Gene Edward Veith, dean of arts and sciences at Concordia University, in Wisconsin, writes that too many proposals to reform America's schools focus on means—vouchers, technology, teacher certification—rather than on ends. Although he does not disparage these means, what American education most urgently requires, Veith contends, is a new philosophy of education—a return to the classical conception of education as the knowledge a person requires to be truly free, and to the classical "trivium" of grammar, logic, and rhetoric. "To be educated in any discipline," he writes, "one must know its basic facts (grammar); be able to think deeply about the subject (logic); and be able to act on that knowledge in a personal, original and independent way (rhetoric)."

Veith cites three examples of how the classical approach to education is being used in primary and secondary schools. The Association of Classical and Christian Schools (ACCS), which currently has 26 member schools, was founded in 1993 by the Reverend Douglas Wilson, a Protestant minister from Idaho, to promote the idea of a Christian education organized around the trivium. In the prototype ACCS school, the Logos School (founded by Wilson in 1980), the primary grades are devoted to acquiring basic knowledge—reading, arithmetic, patriotic and biblical stories. Middle school and junior high are devoted to "the questioning and probing of reality that is logic."

Finally, the high-school years, ages 15 to 18, are devoted to self-expression, and beginning rhetoric classes use textbooks by Aristotle and Cicero. According to Veith, "The level of discourse, the depth of thinking, and what can only be described as a richness of character set the Logos seniors apart. Such are the benefits of a classical education."

Other attempts to construct an educational philosophy around the classical trivium are the Paideia Project—used today in some 30 school districts nationwide—and the Westside Preparatory School in Chicago. These schools help broaden the horizons of thousands of children, including poor children often written off as ineducable.

The classical approach to education is valuable, Veith contends, because it offers a "comprehensive, universal paradigm for learning." In his view, the classical education movement holds the key not only to educational reform but to an educational renaissance in America.

☛ *"Renaissance, Not Reform: The Classical Schools Movement" by Gene Edward Veith, in* Philanthropy, Culture & Society, *August 1996, Capital Research Center.*

Private Schools and Special Ed

In *Meeting the Challenge,* Janet R. Beales, who directs the Reason Foundation's Study Program, points out that, contrary to a widely held myth, public schools do not accept every student. Students that public schools believe they cannot educate are often sent, at public expense, to private schools that specialize in the education of a certain type of student.

Beales distinguishes between three broad categories of difficult-to-educate students who are served by the private

1996 Samaritan Awards

The Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty is a nonprofit educational institute that explores the moral dimensions of a free society. Last year the institute established its Samaritan Awards to honor and encourage the moral and practical advantages of private charity. From nearly 700 applicants, Acton recently honored 10 leading models of effective private charity, both secular and religiously based. Each winner received a $1,000 grant; three finalists will soon be chosen by a national panel of judges and awarded cash grants of $10,000 each. The 10 model programs for 1996 are:

Best Friends Foundation (Washington, D.C.)—Offers adolescent girls mentoring and character-building activities and encourages them to abstain from sex, drugs, and alcohol.

Cumberland College Mountain Outreach Program (Williamsburg, Ky.)—Provides opportunities for students to volunteer building houses, drilling wells, and doing repairs for needy Appalachian families.

Enterprise Mentors International (St. Louis, Mo.)—Trains and provides loans to would-be entrepreneurs in developing countries.

Francis House (Syracuse, N.Y.)—Provides a home to terminally ill patients.

Fresh Start Surgical Gifts (Encinitas, Calif.)—Supplies reconstructive surgery to needy children with serious deformities.

Gates Community Chapel / D.B.A. Freedom Village U.S.A. (Lakemont, N.Y.)—Offers troubled teens character-building activities at a working farm and Christian home.

Interfaith Housing Coalition (Dallas, Tex.)—Alleviates homelessness with transitional housing, job placement, and living skills.

Partners Advancing Values in Education (PAVE) (Milwaukee, Wisc.)—Liberates low-income families from limited educational options through scholarships.

Teen Challenge in South Texas (San Antonio, Tex.)—Tackles drug and alcohol addiction with a 12-month, faith-based counseling program.

Victory Fellowship of Texas (San Antonio, Tex.)—Mentors and rehabilitates gang members, prostitutes, and addicts by encouraging spiritual change.

For more information, contact: The Acton Institute, 161 Ottawa Ave. N.W., The Waters Bldg., Suite 301, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49503. Tel: 616-454-3080, Fax: 616-454-9454, Web site: http://www.acton.org/acton.html, e-mail: info@acton.org.

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sector: "special-education" students are those with mental, physical, emotional, or disabilities. Over 100,000 students, or about 2 percent of the nation's special-education population, currently attend nonpublic schools at the public's expense. (Typically, the private school will operate under contract with government agencies at the local, state, or even federal level).

"At-risk students" include dropouts, teen parents, homeless youth and students with drug problems. School districts in at least 17 states contract with private schools to educate these students. Charter schools—autonomous, publicly funded schools freed from most state and local regulations—play an especially large role in serving these students.

"Adjudicated students" are juvenile criminals who, under compulsory state education laws, are required to attend school until a certain age. About 35,000 adjudicated youth are housed in 2,000 privately operated facilities, including training centers, ranches, shelters, halfway houses and group homes.

Although meaningful comparisons between education outcomes for difficult-to-educate students in public and private schools are currently impossible, given the lack of reliable data, Beales documents the wide variety of learning environments provided by the private sector to deal with such students. These arrangements include residential schools, day schools, charter schools, independent study programs, religious schools, and home schools.

Given this wide variety of options, Beales contends, the commonly heard argument that school-choice policies would turn public schools into a "dumping ground" for the most difficult-to-educate students is simply not credible. On the contrary, a large-scale school-choice program would benefit these students by providing them with a "supply of schools as diverse as the students they are intended to serve." The fact that, even now, private schools already serve many students with special needs, sometimes enrolling the most difficult among them, "lays bare the myth of the public-school dumping ground."

☞ *"Meeting the Challenge: How the Private Sector Serves Difficult to Educate Students" by Janet R. Beales, Policy Study no. 212, the Reason Foundation—tel.: 310-391-2245, fax: 310-391-4395, Web site: http://reason.org.*

Cautionary Tales

Public Schools and Special Ed

Although the cost of educating a child in New York City's public-school system comes to $8,000 per year, that figure, argues Kay S. Hymowitz in her profile of New York City's "special-ed" schools, is actually quite misleading. A full-time special-ed student costs the city $23,598 per year. A part-time special-ed student costs $10,207 per year. But an ordinary student receives only $5,148 in educational services per year. New York's "regular education system," Hymowitz argues, "resembles a parking lot full of 1968 cars, while special ed is like a handful of shiny new Cadillacs."

All this might not be so bad if special-ed classes were actually helping their students. But two-thirds of special-ed students exiting the system in 1995, Hymowitz writes, dropped out instead of graduating. Of the remaining third, only half received a diploma that was worth anything.

New York's special-ed system is a monument to good intentions gone awry. In 1975, Congress passed the All Handicapped Children Act, later called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Initially, the law called on the federal government to pay 40 percent of the cost of the vast program it had called into being. In fact, today Washington funds a mere 7 percent of the program, leaving New York taxpayers to pay the rest.

The law was based on several assumptions: First, that if a team of experts examined a child, it could evaluate his or her problem with scientific precision; second, that this team of experts, drawing on the latest scientific advances, could devise an effective program to treat the problem; and third, that educators could then successfully implement such a program, no matter what the cost. In fact, Hymowitz points out, the initial assumption was completely wrong: Different teams of experts, evaluating the same child, have issued sharply different diagnoses. And if assumption one is flawed, it follows that the others are unworkable.

Today, more than 60 percent of the children assigned to special-ed programs are classified as "learning disabled," a term so vague and expansive, writes Hymowitz, "that it is a standing invitation to any poorly performing child." Hymowitz believes that a sub-

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stantial number of "learning disabled" children come from chaotic, problem-ridden families; their deprivation is cultural, not neurological. Yet the law governing special ed specifies that the category "learning disabled" should "not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of . . . environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage." In other words, many of the students enrolled in expensive special-ed programs have no right to be there.

But there are powerful political forces blocking reform. Special-ed schools have provided jobs for thousands of psychologists, social workers, and evaluators. As a result, the unions are quite satisfied with the status quo. Parents of handicapped children also seem pleased with New York's special-ed program, and politicians, fearful of being accused of a lack of compassion, are unwilling to antagonize these parents. As a result, a special-education system that costs a great deal, accomplishes very little, and starves regular public schools of badly needed funds appears impervious to reform.

☛ *Special Ed: Kids Go In, But They Don't Come Out by Kay S. Hymowitz,* City Journal, *Summer 1996.*

Thoughts on Civil Society

Crime's Terrible Toll

In *Body Count,* former Secretary of Education William J. Bennett and his two co-authors, Princeton criminologist John DiIulio and John P. Walters, the former deputy director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, focus on what they call "superpredators," cruel, cold-blooded, shockingly young men who can and do kill at random, without rhyme, reason, or remorse, and without any fear of retribution. Over the next decade, they predict, the number of such superpredators is bound to increase substantially, leading to an unprecedented crime wave. "America is a ticking crime bomb," they declare, and when it explodes our streets will be inundated with young killers, possibly leading to an "authoritarian backlash" that will undermine our free institutions and bring us "only a short step away from achieving a quasi-police state."

The root cause of predatory street crime, the authors contend, is moral poverty. "By 'moral poverty'," they write, "we mean the poverty of being without loving, capable, responsible adults who teach the young right from wrong. . . . In the extreme, it is the poverty of growing up surrounded by deviant, delinquent, and criminal adults in a perfectly criminogenic environment—that is, an environment that seems almost consciously designed to produce vicious, unrepentant, predatory street criminals."

Among the causes of moral poverty, Bennett and his co-authors cite the cultural revolution of the 1960s that undermined traditional values and institutions and a welfare system that subsidized illegitimacy and subverts the work ethic. But they pay particular attention to drugs, which, they argue, cause moral poverty by dissolving "the bonds of human and familial ties." By making drug-addicted parents indifferent to everything, including the well-being of their children, drugs sever family members not only from one another, but also from the traditional values of the larger society. Growing up in such families is like being raised by a pack of wolves, and those who survive the ordeal are likely to lack certain character traits—such as empathy and impulse control—that we think of quintessentially human.

From this it follows that if we are serious about eradicating moral poverty, we must conduct an uncompromising war against drugs. The authors of *Body Count* argue that, contrary to widely-held misconception, America's war on drugs was yielding impressive results until the Clinton administration came into office. Since Clinton's election, however, "the nation has suffered the greatest increase in drug use and the largest expansion in the supply of illegal drugs ever measured."

Besides waging the war on drugs with renewed vigor, eradicating moral poverty requires that we reform our schools and our systems for criminal justice, welfare, and adoption. Most importantly, however, promoting traditional values among young members of the underclass requires the "re-moralization" of our culture through "a widespread renewal of religious faith and the strengthening of religious institutions."

☛ Body Count: Moral Poverty . . . and How to Win America's War Against Crime and Drugs *by William J. Bennett, John DiIulio, and John P. Walters (Simon & Schuster).*

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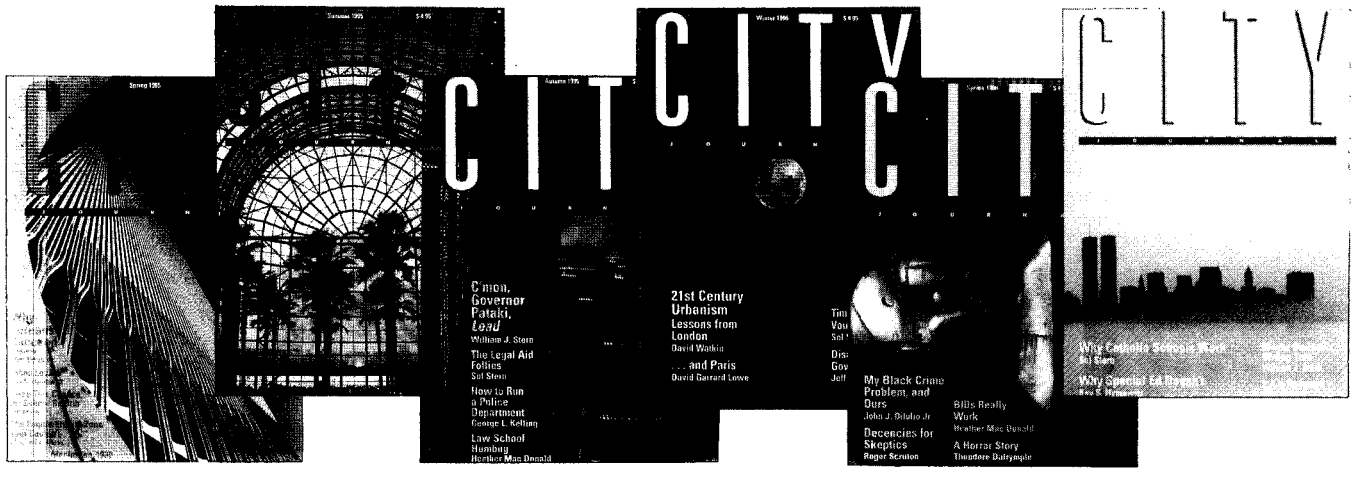

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Profiles in Citizenship

An Educator in the Jim Crow South

At a time when millionaires were quite rare, Julius Rosenwald advised that "[i]t is nearly always easier to make $1,000,000 honestly than to dispose of it wisely." Having accomplished both deeds many times over, Rosenwald was in a position to know. Although he grew fabulously wealthy as a businessman, he was distinguished most by his purposeful philanthropy.

Rosenwald was born in 1862 in Springfield, Illinois, one block away from the home Abraham Lincoln had left the previous year to assume the presidency. Rosenwald's Jewish immigrant parents provided a humble but stable home, which he left at age 17 to apprentice in the clothing industry. He never finished high school.

Rosenwald later claimed to be as surprised as anyone that he became rich. The vehicle for his rise was Sears, Roebuck and Co. The cash-strapped retailing firm turned to him in 1895; in return for his investment of $35,000, he assumed a one-fourth ownership interest. Rosenwald was an officer of Sears for the rest of his life, becoming its president in 1910 and its chairman in 1925. During Rosenwald's career, Sears used its famous catalogue to introduce rural Americans to many retail products and grew into the country's premier mail-order business. Rosenwald's primary contribution to the company's prosperity was to establish excellent quality control and then use it as a basis for policies ("Your money back if not satisfied") that cemented customer loyalty.

by Montgomery Brown

Montgomery Brown is the director of communications for the American Enterprise Institute.

Out of deep gratitude for his success and concern about a range of pressing issues, Rosenwald supported many causes. He gave large sums to overseas projects, such as the effort to combat hunger in Germany following World War I, as well as to causes in his beloved Chicago. He provided the core funding for the city's Museum of Science and Industry and donated nearly $5 million to the University of Chicago.

Julius Rosenwald

Photo by Bettman Archive

Most of his giving was organized under the Julius Rosenwald Fund, launched in 1917 to advance "the well-being of mankind." Much of the fund's work focused on improving the lives of blacks. "Whether it is because I belong to a people who have known centuries of persecution," he said, "or whether it is because I am naturally inclined to sympathize with the oppressed, I have always felt keenly for the colored race."

One estimate values his gifts to black causes at $750 million in today's dollars. He channeled this money in four principal directions. First, he spearheaded the construction of nearly 5,300 schools desperately needed by black children across the South, more than doubling the number available to them. Second, Rosenwald supported higher education for blacks through fellowships to promising individuals and large grants to several black universities. He was a trustee of the Tuskegee Institute, whose leader, Booker T. Washington, had been largely responsible for inspiring Rosenwald to work to improve the condition of blacks.

Third, Rosenwald gave seed money to build two dozen YMCAs and three YWCAs in black neighborhoods. Among other benefits, in many cities these buildings provided the first safe public accommodations for black visitors. Lastly, Rosenwald was a steady donor to programs that improved medical care and health education for blacks.

"Rosenwald's philanthropy educated half a generation of southern black schoolchildren and a Who's Who of the black intellectual elite," according to civil-rights leader Julian Bond.

Although Rosenwald's largesse is impressive, the most useful reason to recall his philanthropy is to learn from the principles that governed it. Rosenwald insisted that his gifts stimulate the generosity and involvement of those who stand to benefit from them. In each community where his money helped build a school, citizens could take pride afterward, not only in the interest and respect Rosenwald showed them, but also in the noble efforts *they* made to scrape together matching contributions. When the Rosenwald Fund discontinued its support for the school-building program in 1931, officials expressed satisfaction that the schools were succeeding and concern that further support could turn into "a crutch rather than a stimulus."

In keeping with his view that giving people more help than they needed is harmful, Rosenwald always prodded his beneficiaries to assume responsibility for themselves and their institutions. His offer of seed money to build YMCAs stipulated that construction must not commence at any given site until the local organization that would own and manage the facility had shown it was ready to do so.

Rosenwald's most celebrated contribution to the practice of philanthropy was his vigorous opposition to perpetual trusts. In his two widely read articles in the *Atlantic Monthly* (May 1929 and December 1930), Rosenwald argued that the task of philanthropists is not to set aside money for the problems of the future, but to confront the needs of their own times. This position remains controversial, but it reflects his earnest resolve to address concrete problems without regard to his own aggrandizement.

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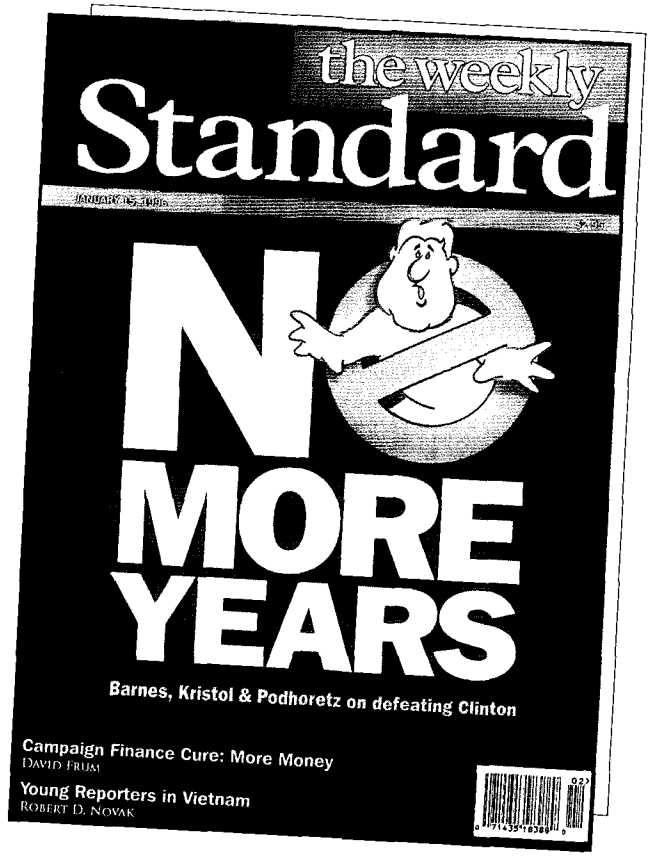

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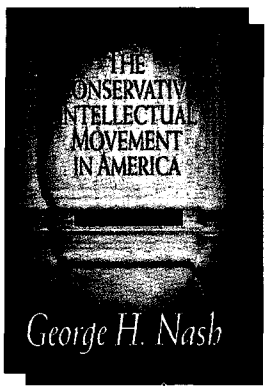

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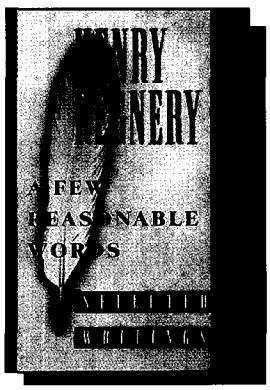

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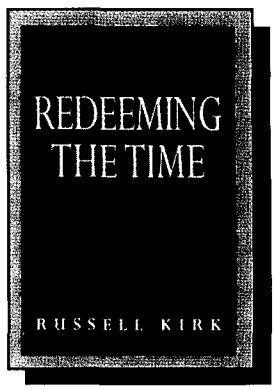

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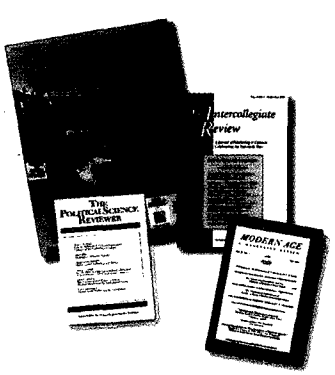

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